

Elective report

Objective 1

What is the most common heart condition in the UAE? How does this differ from the UK?

The most common heart disease in the UAE is ischemic heart disease (IHD). Over 25% of deaths in the UAE are due to cardiovascular a disease, which makes it the number one cause of death in the UAE. (1)

A health survey conducted by the UAE Ministry of Health in collaboration with the Ibn Sina Pharmacy group involved 28,000 people in the UAE. The study found 68% of the participants were overweight or obese, 18% were diabetic and 27% had high cholesterol levels. (2). People as young as 18 in the UAE have suffered heart attacks brought on by unhealthy lifestyle, stress and poor diet. (2).

Coronary heart disease (CHD) is the most common cause of death in the UK. In 2008, one in five males and one in eight female deaths were due to CHD. This means in 2008, 18% of death in males and 13% of death in females were due to CHD (3). These high rates in the CHD are mainly due to the prevalence of the risk factors such as hypertension, diabetes, obesity and cigarette smoking.

Although IHD is the most common heart condition in both UAE and the UK, however it seems to be responsible for more deaths in UAE than in the UK. Secondly, the CHD death rates in the UAE are still on the rise, while the rates in the UK are gradually decreasing. According to Dr Mahmoud Fikri, chief executive of health policies in the UAE Ministry of Health, the cardiovascular disease will triple within the next three years in the middle east.(4). While in the UK, CHD death rates have been falling over the past decade. For example, between 1998 and 2008 CHD death rates for men aged 55 to 64 years in the UK has fallen by 49 %.(3).

Objective 2

How is the healthcare system organized in dubai? How does this differ from the UK?

Dubai's public healthcare is run by the Department of Health and Medical Services (DOHMS). This provides very low cost or free medical services for the residents of UAE. The main strategy of the healthcare is to provide a patient-specific care. The most popular health services provided include

immunizations, medical fitness examinations, psychiatric treatments and community services such as family counseling. Normally the first visit to a private doctor is around £40, after which the visits are charged higher. Doctors provide receipts, which the patients can use to get reimbursed from their private insurance.

The population in Dubai consists of 17% nationals and the rest formed by foreigners from Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Philippines and people from the UK. Three quarters of the patients were formed by foreigners. After 2001, medical services were no longer free for the foreigners. However they are provided with high level of financial assistance. Emergency cases are provided without any charge for all. Foreign workers can obtain their own healthcare insurance or apply for a health card from the DOHMS. Foreign patients are accepted by public hospitals if they have a health card or in cases of emergencies.

The healthcare in the UK is free to all citizens. The NHS is the main body providing the healthcare which is governed by the Department of Health. The NHS has been decentralized into four independent system one for each country of the UK. Each service has its own treatment policies, legislations and healthcare budgets. The NHS is financed from the national insurance tax paid by employees directly from their salaries. The unemployed and dependent family members are exempt from this tax. The UK has a private healthcare sector; which is funded by private insurance contributions. BUPA is one of the leading private healthcare services in the UK.

In the UK the first point of contact for non-emergency cases is a general practitioner (GP). These doctors are very much involved with the long term management of their patients. They provide many services such as education, advice, prescriptions, vaccinations, and refer to specialized doctor in a hospital if needed. There are also nurses working alongside the doctors in the GP practice. All citizens are able to register with the local GP practice. There are similar primary healthcare in Dubai, which are commonly referred to as family doctors.

Objective 3

What steps has the government or other organizations taken to improve the health in the UAE?

As mentioned above a health survey carried out in the UAE found 68% to be overweight or obese, 18% were diabetic and 38% were hypertensive. (2)

To prevent the increase in CHD, it is important that the risk factors are targeted and dealt with first. The UAE Ministry of health has launched an online diabetes database. This database allows the doctors to track the progress of their patients. Also provides up-to-date information and guidelines to aid in the management of their patients. (5)

A National Nutrition Committee has been formed by the UAE Ministry of

Health and other government agencies in attempt to reduce obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular diseases. Their strategy includes education, school programmes and improved food labelling. (6)

Enaya is a health scheme launched by the Dubai Health Authority providing all government employees medical check up, which includes screening for blood pressure, diabetes, cholesterol, depression, stress and cancers. In addition the UAE ministry of Health launched a three year campaign to raise awareness of diabetes and atherothrombosis. (7)

Objective 4

To continue practicing my clinical and practical skills with an evaluative approach

Whilst being at a cardiology firm, I have been placed in various areas including a catheter lab, CCU, A+E and a general medical ward. I have been in various ward rounds, where I observed the interactions between the doctors, patients and the nurses. I was also given the opportunity to examine some patients, especially those with signs. Before examining the patients I ensured that I gained verbal consent and that the patient understood what I will be doing. After completing the examinations I would present my findings back to the doctor, who would give feedback on my examination and presenting skills. I would take on board their advice to improve my skills at all time.

References:

(1) <http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Heart+disease+causes+25pc+deaths+in+UAE.-a0230636467>

(2) United Arab Emirates: Monday, April 20 - 2009

(3) <http://www.bhf.org.uk/>

(4) Middle East: Wednesday, November 25 - 2009

(5) United Arab Emirates: Tuesday, April 14 - 2009

(6) United Arab Emirates: Saturday, December 19 - 2009

(7) United Arab Emirates: Wednesday, July 01 - 2009