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Determining the factors causing delayed referral for fetal echocardiography at tertiary care hospital

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Determining the factors causing delayed referral for fetal echocardiography at tertiary care hospital

Abstract

Objective: To determine the factors causing delayed referral for fetal echocardiography at tertiary care hospital.

Background

Timely referral for fetal echocardiogram is considered essential for identification of congenital heart diseases, interventions and counseling of the parents. The present study highlights the factors associated with delayed referral for fetal echocardiography.

Material and methods:

This is a prospective study including a total of 200 pregnant females referred for fetal echocardiography. The data collected included referral indications, gestational age, maternal age, educational status, referral personnel and final diagnosis on echocardiography.

Results:

The mean gestational age of presentation was found to be 33 weeks (SD 4.8 weeks). Among 200 females, 24 % were referred at second trimester, 69% were presented at third trimester and 6 % of the patients were presented at term. No patient was presented before 18 weeks. Our results showed that most of the patients (94 %) were referred by the gynecologist. 89 % of the patients were booked since first trimester. The most common indication for referral was unexplained death of the children (60%). Out of 200 pregnant women, 40 % were found to be illiterate, 60 % were educated. However, the mean gestational age of presentation of illiterate was 32.9 weeks (SD 4.2) and for educated was 33 weeks (SD 5). Congenital heart disease was diagnosed in 12 % of the patients.

Conclusion: On the basis of the results, it could be concluded that delayed presentation for fetal echocardiogram was not associated with the educational status of the patients. On the other side,

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