



SOCIALLY SIGNIFICANT DISEASES AND THEIR FREQUENCY IN GENERAL MEDICINE

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ABSTRACT

Arterial hypertension, diabetes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and neoplastic processes are most important national priorities, which the Bulgarian healthcare must cope.

Decisive role in the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and monitoring of socially significant diseases have family doctors and their activities in a general medical practice.

A sociological study was conducted among the general medicine practitioners from the region of Stara Zagora on the frequency of some diseases with socially significant character.

A standard questionnaire was used, which was aimed at the social-demographic profile of the family doctors, including a specification of their practices, as well as questions, concerning the average number and age of the registered patients with the respective disease in the general medicine, the monthly number of new cases, average number of individuals with complications in the socially significant disease, frequency of the type of complication.

After processing the results found a high incidence of Arterial hypertension and Diabetes among patients in active age and retirement age who are registered in dispensaries for general medical practice, and increased incidence of neoplasms among them.

This is a prerequisite for enhancing active promotional and preventive activities in the general medical practice.

Key words: family doctor, socially significant diseases, general medical practice

INTRODUCTION

The socially significant diseases are those classes of diseases and separate illnesses, which rank the highest in defining the morbidity and death rate profile in a country. They are the factor which determines the high level of morbidity; the relatively high share in the structure of death causes; the treatment costs; the insuring of social, psychological and economical assistance of the patient, as well as the battle against the development of complications and following disability.

GOALS

The study we performed had the following goals:

1. To determine the frequency of some diseases with socially significant character

among the patients of the general practice around the region of Stara Zagora - Arterial hypertension, Diabetes, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, Neoplasms.

2. To determine the age profile of the patients with the aforementioned diseases.
3. To determine the average monthly number of new cases of these diseases in the general medical practice.
4. To research the frequency in the complications, resulting from the studied socially significant diseases.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

A sociological study was conducted among the general medicine practitioners from the region

of Stara Zagora, for the period from march to april 2010, with the applied method of direct individual survey, done on a voluntary basis with guaranteed anonymity.

A standard questionnaire was used, which was aimed at the social-demographic profile of the family doctors, including a specification of their practices, as well as questions, concerning the average number and age of the registered patients with the respective disease in the general medicine, the monthly number of new cases, average number of individuals with complications in the socially significant disease, frequency of the type of complication.

At data processing recent mathematical and statistical methods were used, which give opportunity for determining the frequency of the studied diseases with socially significant character in the practice of the family doctors.

RESULTS

At the result analysis were separated several key moments:

- Significantly high frequency of Arterial hypertension among the patients in active age (19-65 years old) and the most common complication is the imposition of the left ventricle
- The increasing frequency of Diabetes among the patients in active age and the retirees (19 years and above) - the usual complication being diabetic neuropathy.
- High frequency in breast cancer among the registered female patients in the dispensaries for primary medical

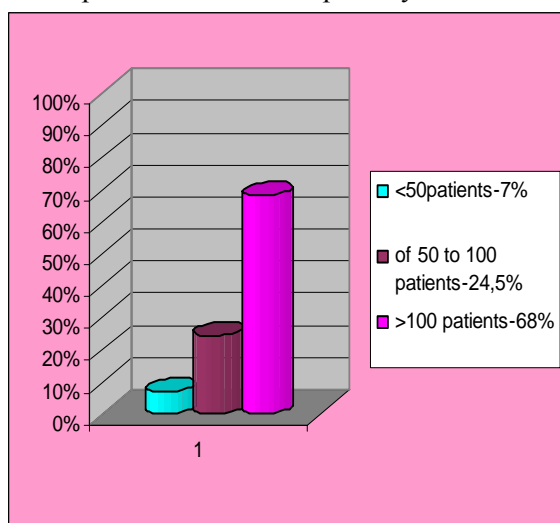


fig.1

assistance, as well as increasing commonality in lung cancer for the male patients.

The number of doctors, who filled out the questionnaire carefully and responsibly was 57. The most numerous of the age groups is the one ranging from 40 to 50 years – 75% (43).

The excerpt includes 2/3 (68,4%, 39) females and 1/3 (31,5%, 18) males, and 73% (42) of them do not have a specialty, 17% (10) have a different specialty, and 8% (5) have specialized in general medicine.

Those who have experience from 10-15 years are 68% (39) of the surveyed family doctors.

In 2/3 of the surveyed, the dispensaries for primary medical assistance are stationed in cities, and in 1/3 – in the neighboring villages; the attended patients include individuals from all gender and age groups.

The number of registered patients in 29 (50%) of the general practitioners who took part in the survey is around 1000-1500 individuals; for 13 (22%) of them is above 1500 people and for the remaining 15 (26%) - below 1000.

68% of the questioned family doctors indicate that there are more than 100 registered patients of Hypertension in their lists, whose predominant age profile is between 19 and 65 years of age for 84% of them. (fig. 1 and fig. 2)

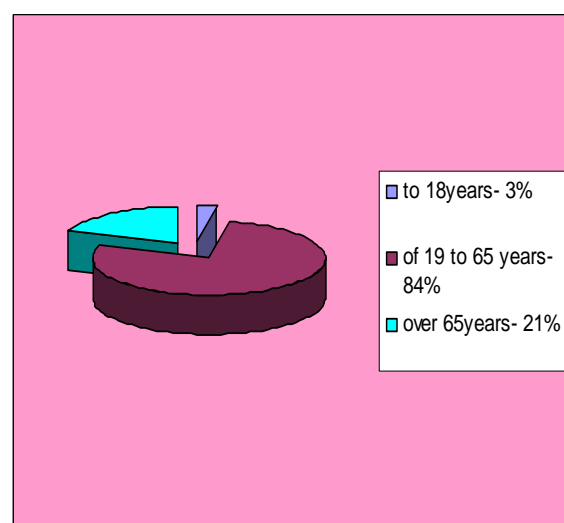


fig.2

The monthly number of new cases for 73% of the questioned is less than 5. For 61% of the doctors, Hypertension complications arise in less than 50 patients, and for 42% - the number of patients who experience complications is

between 50 and 100. Imposition of the left ventricle is the most common problem to arise among the patients with Hypertension for 92% of the practitioners of general medicine. (fig.3)

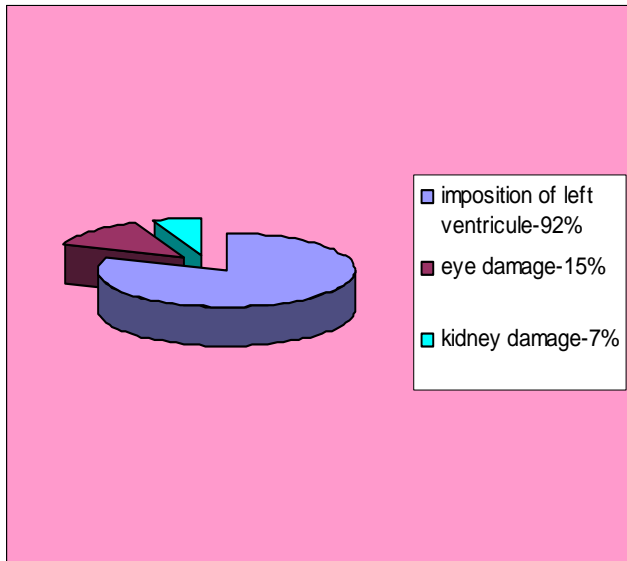


fig.3

In the patient lists of 84% of the participants in the survey, the number of patients with Oncological problems is less than 50 people, and for 15% of them it ranges between 50 and

100. For 61% of the doctors the neoplastic processes are observed in patients in working age and for 38% - in retirees above 65 years old. (fig.4 and fig.5)

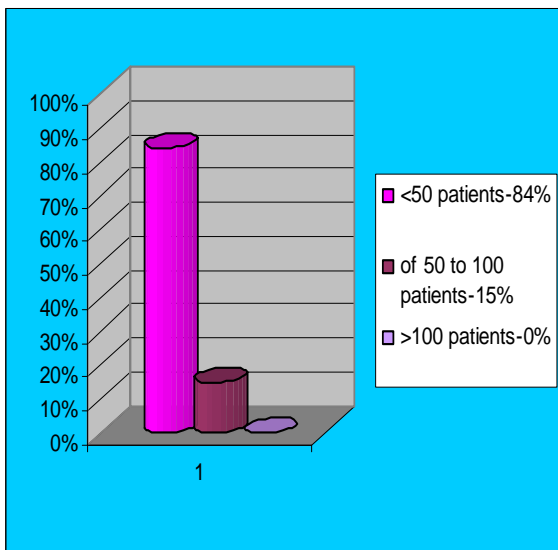


fig.4

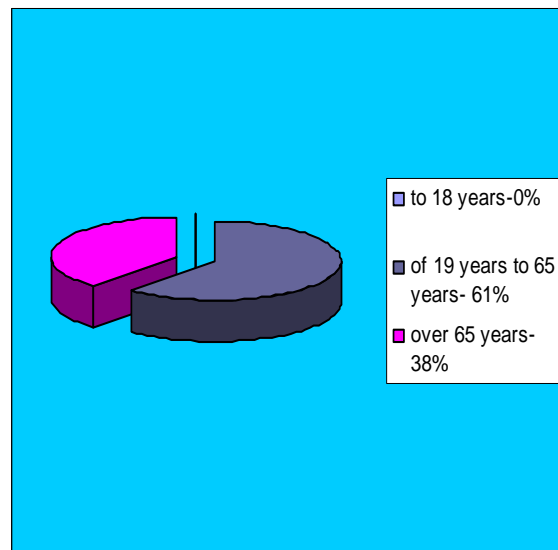


fig.5

The most common Oncological disease among the female patients is breast cancer, for 84% of the general practitioners, followed by colorectal cancer – 50% and cervix cancer – 31% (fig.6).

Leading neoplasia among the male patients is lung cancer, indicated by 75.4% of the doctors, and the second place is shared between the colorectal cancer and the prostate cancer, 54% and 52% respectively. (fig.7)

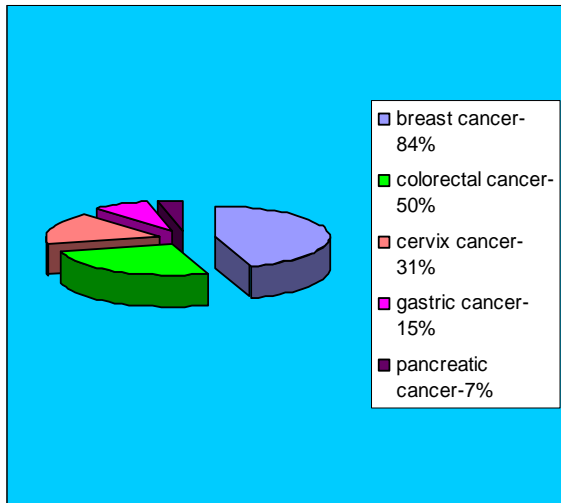


fig.6

For 70% of the questioned doctors, the registered patients with Diabetes do not go above 50; for 19% are between 50 and 100, and for the rest 10.5% - above 100.(fig.8)

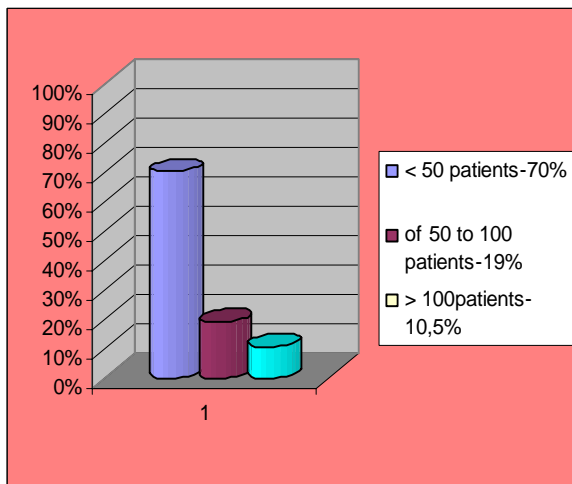


fig.8

The frequency in the number of new cases per month for 98,2% of the doctors is 5, and 68% of them note that the number of patients with complications, resulting from not very well controlled diabetes, is under 50. (fig.10)

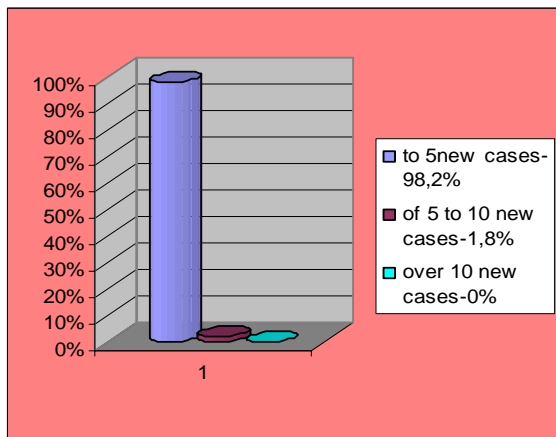


fig.10

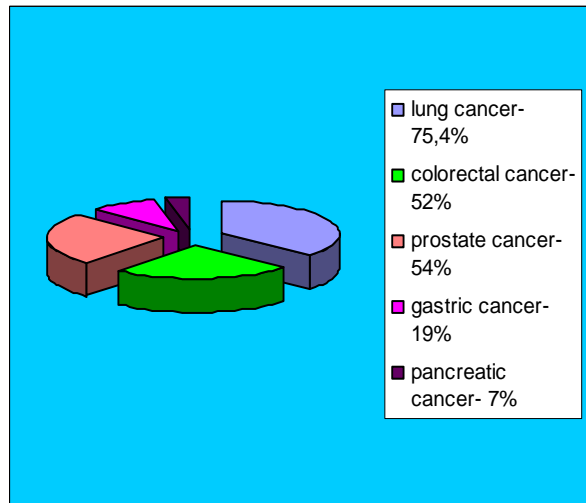


fig.7

The dominating age profile of the patients is between 19-65 years for 64% of the family doctors and above 65 years for 42%. (fig.9)

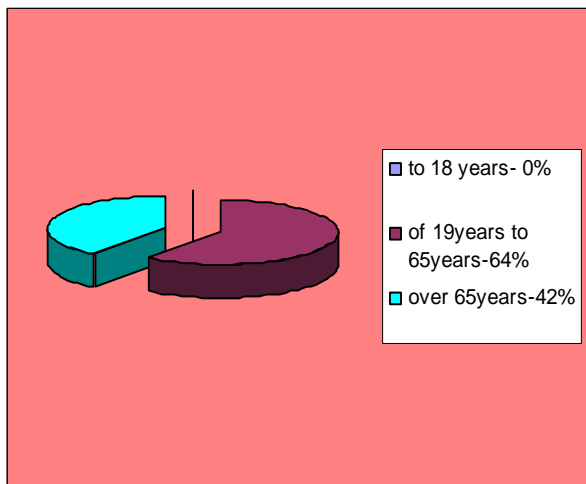


fig.9

Diabetic neuropathy is in the lead among consequential problems in individuals who suffer from Diabetes for 98,2% of the family doctors, followed by diabetic retinopathy according to 33% of the questioned.(fig.11)

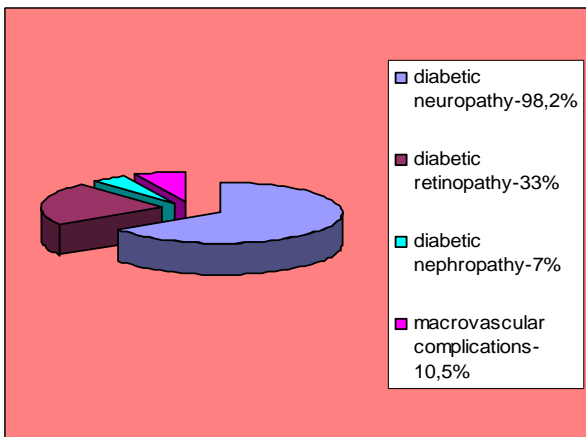


fig.11

87% of the general practitioners indicate that the number of patients with COPD is less than 50 people. The predominant age contragments

are between 19 and 65 years of age according 61% and above 65 years according to 50% of the questioned. (fig. 12 and fig. 13)

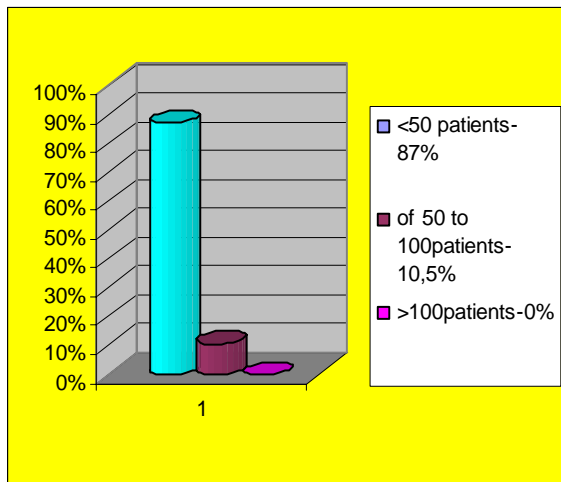


fig.12

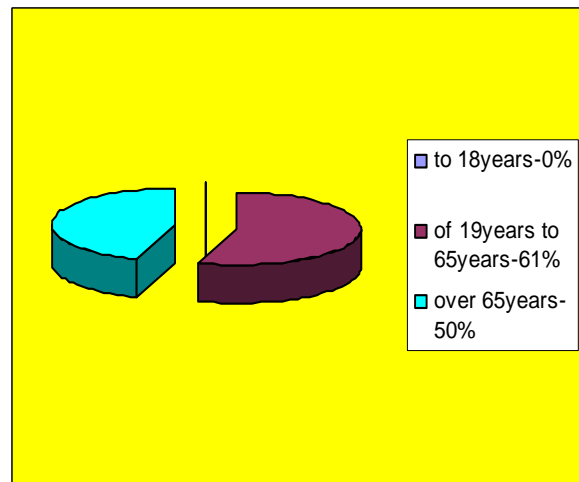


fig.13

CONCLUSIONS

- Our research showed that the socially significant diseases have not changed their structure in the region of Stara Zagora, and they do not differ from those observed in the rest of the country.
- Dealing with Hypertension, Diabetes, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease and the Neoplastic processes remain among the most important national priorities.
- These diseases, affecting primarily people in active, working age are a common reason for development of complications, disabilities and even fatal end when they aren't diagnosed on time or have been treated and controlled improperly.

This is a challenge not only for the health system, it affects all aspects of the social and

economical spheres, because of the significant social and economical damage, because of the burdens in the social funds.

Resources to deal with these problems could be found:

- In prevention, by raising the health culture of the population and development in the concept of health promotion.
- In good organization of the general medical practice for observation and examination conducted by the family doctor.

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