

Abstract

Background and Aim: Cardiovascular diseases are one of the increasing non-communicable diseases in the world. Inadequate health literacy is associated with a high prevalence of cardiovascular disease. Considering the significant burden of cardiovascular disease, identifying the challenges and problems caused by inadequate health literacy and promoting it in patients, can play a decisive role in the prevention, treatment of these diseases and reducing costs. The aim of this study was to explain the challenges of health literacy in patients with acute coronary syndrome and to provide strategies to improve it.

Methods: This study was conducted through a conventional content analysis approach through in-depth semi-structured interviews at Imam Khomeini Hospital of Ardabil. A total of 29 individuals (20 patients and 9 nurses) participated in this study and purposeful sampling was continued until data saturation. After obtaining informed consent, the interviews were analyzed in an agreed location, recorded, word-for-word, manually, and by content analysis method using MAXQDA software simultaneously collecting data. Robustness and accuracy of data were obtained through acceptability, verifiability, reliability, and portability.

Findings: The findings of this study in relation to health literacy challenges of patients with acute coronary syndrome in heart and CCU departments led to the emergence of 4 main themes, 12 sub-themes, and 58 basic codes. Also, their promotion strategies are presented in 68 themes. They emphasized "irresponsibility", "social apathy", "Perceptual-cognitive and emotional problems" and "inadequate distribution of resources". The strategies provided by the experts in the fields of "education", "communication", "institutionalization of the nursing process in patient care", "peer learning", "family participation", "use of face-to-face education and audio-visual for patients" and "introduction of credible educational resources" were emphasized.

Conclusion: Given that the successful management of many acute or chronic diseases is affected by patients' perceptions of health literacy, providing strategies to people who have difficulty understanding this information can have a positive impact on their health outcomes. Therefore, the proposed strategies should be prioritized by the health system in order to increase the health literacy abilities of patients.

Keywords: Acute Coronary Syndrome, Health Literacy, Qualitative Study