Accessibility of medications by chronically ill elderly patients: a cross-sectional assessment of the WHO recommended universal health coverage among a geriatric population in Nigeria

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Background

• Universal health coverage (UHC) means all people receive quality health services and protected from health threats without financial hardship. (WHO 2010).

• >50% of world’s population still do not have UHC

• Key assessment questions for UHC is “can you afford to get medicine and other products that you need?”
Background...

• For UHC to be achieved, health needs of older people needs to be considered.
• Hypertension, diabetes, arthritis and eye defects are common chronic illnesses among older populations, requiring accessibility of medication to prevent complications.
Objective

• We aimed to assess UHC among a geriatric in Nigeria
Method...

Design and area of study

• Using a cross-sectional study design, enrolment of elderly persons into study was done in community projects in three communities across Nigeria.
Method...
Sampling method

• Using systematic random sampling technique, elderly persons meeting criteria of age \( \geq 55 \) years and having at least 1 reported common chronic medical conditions (hypertension, arthritis and/or diabetes) were selected.
Method...

Data collection

• An in-depth interview using structured interview guide was conducted among participants.

• Participants demographics were recorded along with self reported chronic medical condition.
Method...
Data collection (2)

• Key questions on accessibility of medication and UHC were
  – “Can you always afford the medicine that you need for your chronic medical condition?” and
  – “Are you under National health insurance scheme that aids health access?”
Method...

Data analysis

- Data was analysed on SPSS version 20, using frequency distribution table and comparing demographic characteristics and assessment outcome of respondents.
Result

• No of respondents= 521 elderly
• Mean age= 68 years
• Females= 70%
• Main education level;
  – primary education (58% ); 5% post primary; others had none(37%)
• Occupation level;
  – 41% unemployed; 46% small scale farming; others(13%)
Result...

Common chronic illnesses;- 54% reported at least two of four common chronic illnesses assessed
Result...

• Affordability of medications = 22% (114/521)
  – 19% among hypertensive patients;
  – 24% among arthritic patients;
  – 7% among diabetic patients.

• Recently missed medications (<3 months) 2nd to unaffordability = 78%
Result...

• Business persons were most likely to afford medications than others (Odds ratio: 0.1975, P < 0.0001).

• Majority (82%) are not National health insurance scheme that aids health access.”
Conclusion

• Chronically ill elderly people in Nigeria cannot always afford medications or health access, thus are short of UHC.

• Innovative strategy to improve UHC among the geriatric population is recommended.
Thank you

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