

Abstract No. **15**

Category: **Prevention**

Title: **The Main Reasons for not Finishing a Cardiac Rehabilitation Program Might be Preventable and not Related to Age**

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**Abstract:**

**Background:** Elderly patients are less likely to be referred to cardiac rehabilitation (CR) compared to younger adults. Once a patient starts CR, the benefits can be lost due to the unfeasibility to finish the program. This study aims to assess the reasons why patients did not complete the cardiac rehabilitation program and to determine if the causes are different between patients older than 80 years and younger.

**Methods:** We conducted a prospective, cohort, single-centre study. All consecutive patients that were referred between April 2014 and October of 2018 to CR and were able to do physical activity were included. Patients who did not attend or did not complete the programme were interviewed by telephone to ascertain the primary underlying reason for this, usually one week after the event.

**Results:** Of the 896 patients admitted in the CR program, 44 % (n = 397) did not complete the program. There was no significant difference in age between those who finished and those who did not (64 years [IQR 55 - 73] vs 65 years [IQR 57 - 73]; p = ns). Among those who finished, there was a higher proportion of men (67% vs 59%; p = 0.01) and less smokers (24 % vs 31 %; p = 0.04). There was no difference regarding the reason for referral to the program. Overall, the main reason of not finishing was desertion in 33 % (n = 131), followed by insurance issues in 26% (n = 104), disease in 14 % (n = 54) and travel in 9% (n = 35). Death and those who could not be reached by telephone were 8 % (n = 28). There were no significant differences in proportions regarding the reasons for not finishing the program between patients older than 80 years and younger (Figure 1).

**Conclusion:** The main reasons why 59 % of eligible patients to CR did not complete the program were desertion and insurance issues, two situations potentially preventable. There were no differences regarding the reason for not finishing the program between the elderly and their younger counterparts.