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Quality of Life of Patients Awaiting Percutaneous Nephrolithotomy (PCNL) in the Teaching Hospital, Anuradhapura

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Background: Kidney stone disease is a prevalent urological problem that significantly impacts patients' daily lives. While percutaneous nephrolithotomy (PCNL) is a key management strategy, the quality of life (QoL) of patients awaiting this procedure in Sri Lanka has not been explored.

Objective: To evaluate the QoL and its determinants among patients awaiting PCNL in Teaching Hospital-Anuradhapura (THA).

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among patients attending Urology Clinic, THA. QoL was assessed using SF-36 questionnaire, alongside demographic and clinical data. Data were analyzed employing descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, independent samples t-test, and one-way ANOVA. Ethics Review Committee, Faculty of Medicine and Allied Sciences, Rajarata University approved the study.

Results: Study included 216 patients aged 18-79 years (Mean 52.7). Majority (65.3%) were males. Among them, 39.4% and 38.4% had symptoms for 1-2 and 2-5 years respectively. Sixty-four (29.6%) had undergone stenting. Mean scores in eight QoL domains varied with the lowest (25.23) for 'role limitation due to emotional problems (RL-EP)' and highest (58.54) for 'role limitation due to physical health (RL-PH)'. Significant weak, negative correlation was observed between patient's age and the 'physical functioning (PF)' score ($r=-0.154$, $p<0.05$). 'Social functioning (SF)' score differed significantly across income levels ($p<0.01$), with higher score in higher income categories. Longer symptom duration was significantly associated with reduced QoL in PF, RL-PH, SF, 'pain' and 'emotional wellbeing (EW)' domains ($p<0.05$). Longer waiting time for PCNL significantly impacted RL-PH, SF, and 'pain' scores ($P<0.05$). The EW score was significantly lower among patient with multiple calculi. Patient with stents reported a significantly higher scores in RL-PH and RL-EP ($p<0.05$).

Conclusion: The findings indicated a negative impact of kidney stones on multiple domains of QoL, influenced by varied demographic, disease-related and healthcare-related factors. This underscores the need for timely intervention and holistic patient care strategies for a better QoL for these patients.

Keywords: Kidney Stones, Quality of Life, SF-36