
We contacted 219 of the 246 hospitals listed (89%) in the general catalog of the Spanish Ministry of Health, Social Services, and Equality (Ministerio de Sanidad, Servicios Sociales e Igualdad [MSSSI])
6; 60 hospitals declined to participate, and 8 were excluded due to insufficient data. We thus present information from 151 hospitals, obtained by an online and telephone survey in the last quarter of 2011.

The hospitals were classified into 3 groups according to the complexity of health care provision: level 1 (no hemodynamic monitoring, electrophysiology, or cardiac surgery), level 2 (hemodynamic monitoring and/or electrophysiology, but no surgery), and level 3 (hemodynamic monitoring, electrophysiology, and surgery).

The study examined 2 types of HF unit. A general unit is a designated hospital service with an assigned manager and a specific protocol for the care of HF patients. An advanced unit has resources for the treatment of critically ill patients, including the management of advanced HF, pretransplant evaluation, hemodynamic monitoring, and ability to recommend implantation of an automated cardioverter defibrillator or cardiac resynchronization device.

The survey included hospitals from all 17 Spanish autonomous regions and Melilla, with a total assigned catchment population of 34.2 million people. Of these centers, 87 (57.6%) are level 1

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**Organización de la atención a la insuficiencia cardíaca en España: unidades existentes y características**

**To the Editor,**

Heart failure (HF) is a major health problem, and the burden it places on health care systems and society in general has increased in recent years and is expected to continue to grow. Due to the wide diversity of patients with very different prognoses and therapeutic options, current guidelines recommend a multidisciplinary approach and the establishment of organizational structures to guarantee its implementation (recommendation class I A).2

Here we present the results of the MOSAIC (Mapa de la Organización de la Insuficiencia Cardíaca en España [Map of Heart Failure Organization in Spain]) project, which updates and expands the information available about resources and organizational structures in Spain for the care of patients with HF3 and complements the data from other recent studies conducted by the Spanish Society of Cardiology.4

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**Figure.** Heart failure units by type and hospital complexity.
Table

Programs and Activities in General Heart Failure Units (n = 44) and Tasks Assigned to Nursing Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programs and protocols in the unit</th>
<th>Number (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cardiac rehabilitation program</td>
<td>20 (45.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint protocol with internal medicine</td>
<td>19 (43.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint protocol with primary care</td>
<td>21 (47.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital care program</td>
<td>10 (22.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific telemedicine program</td>
<td>9 (20.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unstructured telephone contact</td>
<td>5 (11.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structured follow-up by telephone</td>
<td>6 (13.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collection of biometric data with remote telemonitoring devices</td>
<td>5 (11.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remote tele-intervention by video link</td>
<td>1 (2.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remote telemonitoring of implantable devices (AIDC and resynchronization devices)</td>
<td>6 (13.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day-hospital</td>
<td>28 (63.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit with seating</td>
<td>15 (34.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotation of resident physicians</td>
<td>21 (47.7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responsibilities of nursing staff

- Training of patients and carers                                | 41 (93.2) |
- Patient care support tasks (eg, ECG)                           | 42 (95.5) |
- Nurse-led clinic                                                | 29 (65.9) |
- Contacting and assessing patients by telephone                 | 35 (79.5) |
- Link with primary care physician and nurses                    | 31 (70.5) |
- Telemonitoring                                                  | 11 (25)   |

AIDC, automated implantable cardioverter defibrillator; ECG, electrocardiogram. Values are expressed as no. (%).

* Following a written protocol and contact schedule.

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Conflicts of Interest

A. Castro-Beiras, M. Anguita, J. Comín, J.M. Vázquez-Rodríguez and J. Muñiz received financial remuneration from SANED (the company contracted to undertake field work) for advice on the development of this project.

Alfonso Castro-Beiras, a,b Manuel Anguita-Sánchez, c Josep Comín, d José Manuel Vázquez-Rodríguez, e Trinidad de Frutos, f and Javier Muñiz.a,g

a Instituto Universitario de Ciencias de la Salud e Instituto de Investigación Biomédica de A Coruña (INIBIC), Universidad de A Coruña, A Coruña, Spain
b Instituto de Investigación Biomédica de A Coruña (INIBIC), Complejo Hospitalario Universitario de A Coruña (CHUCHAC), SERGAS, Universidade da Coruña (UDC), A Coruña, Spain
c Servicio de Cardiología, Hospital Universitario Reina Sofía, Córdoba, Spain
d Programa de Insuficiencia Cardiaca, Servicio de Cardiología y Grupo de Investigación Biomédica en Enfermedades del Corazón, Instituto Hospital del Mar de Investigación Médica (IMIM), Barcelona, Spain
f Pfizer Medical Department, Madrid, Spain
g Corresponding author: E-mail address: javmu@udc.es (J. Muñiz).

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The Use of Coronary Artery Bypass Graft in our Setting. Are We Following the Recommendations of the Clinical Guidelines?

Utilización de la cirugía de revascularización coronaria en nuestro medio. ¿Seguimos las recomendaciones de las guías?

To the Editor,

Coronary artery bypass graft (CABG) is the treatment of choice in certain clinical and anatomical contexts in coronary artery disease, as described in clinical practice guidelines, including those of the European Society of Cardiology, which has been adopted by the Spanish Society of Cardiology.1

The aim of this study was to analyze the number of patients referred for CABG in our setting, determine the rate of interventions per head of population, compare the rate obtained with other rates in Spain, and appraise the degree of compliance with the recommendations of the clinical practice guidelines.

To achieve this, we determined the number of patients referred for CABG by our unit between January 1, 2012 and October 31, 2013, computed the number of patients treated per million inhabitants in our region, and compared these results with the situation in other parts of the country. Finally, we analyzed the number of patients who should have been referred for CABG according to the recommendations of the guidelines. Our unit is the provincial referral center for cardiac catheterization and has a catchment area of 630 000 inhabitants.

During the study period, severe coronary disease was diagnosed in 1409 patients. These patients’ therapeutic management is shown in the Figure. Of 75 referrals, 44 underwent surgery (58.7%), 27 (61%) underwent isolated CABG, and the remainder underwent combined CABG and valve replacement. This corresponds to 38.1 and 23.3/million inhabitants per year for combined surgery and isolated CABG, respectively. Thirty-one patients did not undergo surgery because they had died, had refused to undergo surgery, or because the cardiac surgeon did not consider them suitable for surgery, among other reasons.

The clinical profile (Table) of the 42 patients referred for isolated CABG was absence of high surgical risk and high SYNTAX score (chronic occlusions, trunk disease and/or multivessel disease with multiple lesions). Referral was generally decided upon after consultation between the cardiac catheterization specialist and the clinical cardiologist.

According to the registry of interventions of the Spanish Society of Cardiovascular Surgery, 7149 patients underwent CABG in Spain in 2011 (154/million inhabitants per year); of these, 5010 underwent CABG only (111/million inhabitants per year) and the remainder combined surgery.1 In Germany in the same year, 55299 patients underwent surgery (680/million inhabitants per year) and 41976 underwent CABG only (516/million inhabitants-year).1 In the United States in 2010, isolated CABG was performed in 219 000 patients (697/million inhabitants per year).1

Because these data are influenced by the prevalence of the disease in different geographical areas, we analyzed the ratio between percutaneous revascularization and CABG. At our center, this was 44.7 for isolated CABG and 24.7 for combined surgery. According to the Spanish Cardiac Catheterization Registry, 63202 patients underwent percutaneous revascularization in 2011, giving a percutaneous revascularization/CABG ratio of 12.6 for isolated CABG and 8.8 for combined surgery.1 In the United States in 2010, the percutaneous revascularization/CABG ratio was 2.2.

Patients with multivessel disease are a heterogeneous group and it is difficult to generalize strategies;6 nevertheless, the clinical

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**Figure.** Therapeutic management of patients diagnosed with coronary artery disease.