

The Indirect Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic on Hospitalizations for Cardiovascular Diseases in Abruzzo

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Background:

In 2020 the Covid-19 pandemic influenced the organization of all health systems, imposing new rules for accessing the hospitals and delaying or reducing the ability to cope with all the population needs. In addition, people with life-threatening conditions deferred care for their fear of contagion. The study aimed to evaluate the indirect impact of Covid-19 on hospitalization rates for cardiovascular diseases in 2020 in Abruzzo.

Methods:

Data were obtained from the hospital discharge records of all Abruzzo. We analyzed all the hospitalizations included in Major Diagnostic Categories 5 (cardiovascular diseases). First, we distinguished both between public or private hospitalizations and ordinary or day-hospital admissions. Second, we compared the first nine months of 2020 with a mean of the same months in the two previous years. Finally, we calculated the variable percentage.

Results:

A huge reduction in hospitalization in MCD 5 contest was observed in each subgroup. Specifically, ordinary regimen had a peak of -56,4% in April. Day-hospital admissions were the most affected by Covid-19 with a peak of -84% in April. The largest reduction in hospitalizations occurred in private hospitals, in both ordinary (-81% in April) and DH admissions (-100% in April). A rebound in admissions was reported only for ordinary private regime between June and September, with a peak of + 24% in August.

Conclusions:

Covid-19 had a severe impact on Abruzzo hospitalizations. The medical conditions that we examined needed effective hospital treatment to avoid adverse outcomes or death. Subsequently, fewer hospitalizations for such medical conditions were almost certainly associated with patient harm. Despite the pandemic, health system leaders should manage to provide subjects with hospital care, when necessary.

Key messages:

- Covid-19 had a significant indirect impact on the rate of hospitalizations for cardiovascular disease in Abruzzo.
- Despite the pandemic, regional health systems should manage to provide effective hospital care for patients with cardiovascular conditions that require hospitalization.