

25<sup>th</sup> European

# Nutrition and Dietetics Conference

April 22-23, 2019 | Rome, Italy

## Cost of enteral formulae feed in critically ill patients in a tertiary care centre: An observational study

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The benefits of enteral nutrition is very well known, specialised enteral feeding can be provided by the use of blenderised kitchen feeds or reconstituted powder based supplemental nutrition also called as scientific formula feeds. Scientific feeding formulae have got some advantages over blenderised kitchen diets which include minimisation of feed contamination<sup>1</sup>, consistency in amount and supply of nutrients, permissible osmolarity and viscosity and reduced blockage of tubes<sup>2,3</sup>. In an earlier observational ICU study, among the 20 intensive care units studied in Mumbai only around 50 % of patients were being fed by scientific formula feeds. Cost becomes a very important factor in Indian Intensive care units since most of the payments are out of pocket and less than 5 % of the entire population are covered by medical insurance as per national family health survey-5 for national health insurance. Methodology- This is the first Indian observational study that have studied the cost of scientific feeding formulae in intensive care patients in a tertiary care intensive care unit which provides nutrition by specialized formula feed to 100% of its patients when indicated as per screening criteria Nrs-2002 or the Nutric score (without the Interleukin-6). Further this was then correlated to APACHE2 score and the length of stay of the patient. Results- Average length of stay was lesser in patients with lesser APACHE2 scores but cost of feed was found to be higher whereas patients with higher APACHE2 scores Length of stay was higher but cost of feed was lower.

**Conclusion:** It does appear that lesser the number of days the patient stays in the ICU more is the cost of scientific formula feeding. However the cost of feeding per day is much lesser than the cost of many others like antibiotics in the ICU.

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