

Holistic approach to COPD patients- Lyubima Despotova-Toleva - Plovdiv Medical University

Lyubima Despotova-Toleva

Plovdiv Medical University, Bulgaria

Abstract

The holistic approach, known also as the bio-psycho-social approach should be the main approach to COPD patients. COPD is a progressive and debilitating disease, associated with several co-morbidities and with significant impact on the quality of life not only of the patients, but on their family and relatives. Behavioral factors such as smoking and inappropriate life style are contributing factors to the progression of the disease and decreased quality of life (QoL). These patients could also need palliative care in the end stages of the disease. The general practitioner (GP) is a key person in providing high quality health care for COPD patients, because they are mainly observed, treated and managed in a general practice setting. GPs must be aware of the new guidelines, skilled enough and prepared to deal with them, applying the holistic approach. We are focusing on some important issues such as early recognition/ detection of COPD in general practice, close follow-up, proper medical and non-medical treatment, inducing life style changes, supportive care, quality of life (including approved tests) and palliative care. Applying a holistic approach means also organizing teams according to the needs of the patient with medical and nonmedical specialists. Applying a holistic approach is the best tactical and strategic option for better care and life for COPD patients.