

CARDIAC REHABILITATION IN THE ERA OF COVID-19: THE CHALLENGES

SINESCU Crina ¹

Editor: Constantin MUNTEANU, E-mail: office@bioclima.ro



Balneo and PRM Research Journal

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.12680/balneo.2021.452>

Vol.12, No.3 September 2021

p: L31

Corresponding author: SINESCU Crina, E-mail: crina.sinescu@umfcd.ro

1.University of Medicine and Pharmacy Carol Davila, Bucharest

Abstract

Introduction. Cardiac rehabilitation is the main pillar in the non-pharmacological therapy of the patient after an acute cardiovascular event. Despite the health and economic benefits, less than a third of eligible patients are enrolled in rehabilitation programs. These already low numbers of patients benefiting from cardiac recovery programs have dropped considerably when many rehabilitation services have been stopped due to the COVID-19 pandemic burst.

Materials and Methods. Pandemics challenge health care systems worldwide, exposing their structural limitations. In particular, cardiac rehabilitation meets an unprecedented barrier due to COVID-19 restrictions. Telemedicine plays a vital role in the midst of the pandemic, being able to offer remote assistance health care services to patients in need, for the continuity of health in the home environment. We analyzed the before and after COVID-19 status of tele-health around the world and factors which have influenced its faster implementation, alongside the most addressed pathologies.

Results. Telemedicine has a variable uptake around the world, which is not necessarily correlated to the country development status. Nonetheless, in the COVID-19 era, the trajectory of telemedicine and tele-rehabilitation is springboard, but still lacks significant structural issues. Pan-European initiatives should be explored from regulations and governments frameworks when pandemic ends.

Conclusion. In conclusion, the pandemic we live in has emphasized the core position of telemedicine in a developed health care systems and international efforts are being made to accelerate its implementation. A sustainable remote assisted system of health care services would broaden the access to cardiac rehabilitation, thus being an important asset.