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Challenges faced by parents of children with congenital heart disease

Azwa Aziz

Aga Khan University, Pakistan

A baby for parents is a precious gift by God but suddenly after birth or few month or years after their child diagnose with congenital heart disease. At Aga Khan University every month 20 or more, children diagnosed with CHD and admitted for treatment. Their treatment has long term hospitalization and suffering. It not only effect on child life but also a big challenge for parents which I as a nurse recognize. It effect mental health of parents especially mothers due to long term hospitalization, care, financial issues, altered family process, depression, hopelessness and posttraumatic stress symptoms. Some parents remain in denial phase because they get scared if their child disease leads to death. One of the biggest problem parents' face is financial crisis, congenital heart disease treatment listed in one of the most expensive treatments. Due to financial problem many parents decide to leave against medical advice from hospital. These children unable to get treated and their life expectancy decrease and lead to death. These parents may be helped by introducing early interventions to alleviate stress and reduce children's emotional and behavioral problems. These problems resolve to some extent by proper counseling of parents and children about disease process, treatment and after treatment checkup plans, financial support or welfare support given to lower class family, during pregnancy awareness program should be given to mother to reduce the risk of congenital problems. In hospital every week nurse and doctors should conduct stress relieving activities for children and parents and make efforts to improve their life purposeful, give positive true statements to decrease hopelessness. We as a nurses or health care provider should realize the feelings of parents and children and treat them accordingly.

azwa.aziz94@yahoo.com

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