Towards a High-Quality Hospital at Home in a post-COVID scenario

Authors:
Jordi Altés (1), Maria Aseñó (1), Magalí Castella (2), Irene Perera (1), Lluís Burgués (2), Celia Cardozo (1), Nuria Selgas (1), David Nicolás (1), and Faust Feu (2).
(1) Hospital at Home, Clínic Barcelona
(2) Quality and Patient Safety Department, Clínic Barcelona

Corresponding author: Dr. Jordi Altés, jaltes@clinic.cat
Deputy Medical Director
ClínicBarcelona, Spain

Introduction
- COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced the value of home-based models of care in a moment of serious risks derived from traditional health care systems.
- High-quality and economically sustainable home-based medical care represents an effective way to achieve the goal of patient centredness.
- To the maximum acceptance of this paradigm shift, it is suitable to have tools to better measure the outcomes of home-based hospital care.
- We are working on measures that allow us to advance in the management of quality and clinical safety and to be able to benchmark.

Setting
- In Catalonia, an autonomous region of Spain with a population of 7.7 million, currently there are 35 Hospital at Home (HaH) units distributed throughout the territory. Differences between Catalan HaH units exist, but we have few comparative data.
- In Barcelona HaH is provided by a network of healthcare facilities structured in 4 integrated health areas, one of which is the Integrated Health Area of Left Barcelona (AISBE).
- At the hospital level, AISBE is led by Clínic Barcelona, a 850-bed teaching hospital that covers a population of more than 500,000 citizens.
- The HaH Clínic Barcelona currently treats more than 2,000 patients each year and serves the adult population throughout the AISBE territory and other parts of Catalonia.

Methods
- HaH Clínic Barcelona care is delivered at home by a multidisciplinary team of 50 healthcare professionals (doctors, nurses, administrative staff, pharmacist, physiotherapist, and social worker).
- Patients most often treated in HaH Clínic Barcelona are frail patients with multi morbidity that are admitted for exacerbation of chronic diseases, and/or infectious diseases that require intravenous antimicrobial treatment. Surgical pathology, either urgent or scheduled, and acute psychiatric pathology, both adult and adolescent, complete HaH service portfolio. Through an analysis of previous studies and an internal audit we have identified a set of key outcome indicators.

Conclusions
- Hospital at home (HaH) has been expanding in many regions, especially during COVID-19 pandemic, meaning a new paradigm in hospital care.
- In the current post-COVID scenario, standards of quality and clinical safety for HaH at least as strict as those of conventional hospitalization must be required.
- To achieve excellent HaH services, easily measurable outcome indicators are important. We propose a set of HaH key outcome indicators. It should help to strengthen HaH making continuous improvement and benchmarking between the different HaH possible.
- In parallel, we are working on more specific HaH patient-centred outcome measures.