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Poster for Sickle Cell Disease and Barriers to Care in South Yorkshire from 2017 to 2023

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Abstract : Background: Sickle cell disease (SCD) is a complex, multisystem condition that significantly impacts patients' quality of life, characterized by acute illness episodes, progressive organ damage, and reduced life expectancy. In the UK, over 13,000 individuals are affected, with South Yorkshire having the fifth highest prevalence, including approximately 800 patients. Retinal complications in SCD can manifest as either proliferative or non-proliferative disease, with proliferative changes being more prevalent. These retinal issues can cause significant morbidity, including visual loss and increased care requirements, underscoring the need for regular monitoring. An integrated approach was applied to ensure timely interventions, ultimately enhancing patient outcomes and reduce ‘did not attend’ rates. Aim: To assess the factors which may influence attendance to Haematology and Ophthalmology Clinics with attention towards levels of deprivation towards non-attendance. Method : A retrospective study on 84 eligible patients, from the regional tertiary Centre for Sickle Cell Care (Sheffield Teaching Hospital) from 2017 to 2023. The study focused on the incidence of sickle cell eye disease, specifically examining the outcomes of patients who attended the combined haematology and ophthalmology clinics. Patients who did not attend either clinic were excluded from the analysis to ensure a clear understanding of the combined clinic's impact. This data was then compared with the United Kingdom’s Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) datasets to assess if inequalities of care affected this population. Results: The study concluded that the effectiveness of combining haematology and ophthalmology clinics was reduced following the intervention. The DNA rates increased to 40% for the haematology clinic. Additionally, a significant proportion of the cohort was classified as residing in areas of deprivation, suggesting a possible link between socioeconomic factors and non-attendance rates Conclusion: These findings underscore the challenges of integrating care for SCD patients, particularly in relation to socioeconomic barriers. Despite the intent to streamline care and improve patient outcomes, the increase in DNA rates points to the need for further investigation into the underlying causes of non-attendance. Addressing these issues, especially in deprived areas, could enhance the effectiveness of combined clinics and ensure that patients receive the necessary monitoring and interventions for their eye health and overall well-being. Future strategies may need to focus on improving accessibility, outreach, and support for patients to mitigate the impact of socioeconomic factors on healthcare attendance.

Keywords : south yorkshire, sickle cell anemia, deprivation, factors, haematology
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