Anxiety Amongst Patients Admitted In A City Centre Hospital On A 'COVID-19 Pathway'

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Background

Our aim was to assess the prevalence of anxiety amongst patients admitted on a COVID-19 pathway and to evaluate the impact of gender, age, co-morbidity, pre-existing anxiety and sources of information used for COVID-19 on anxiety levels.

Methods

- A prospective single-centre study. Patients over 18 years and commenced on a COVID-19 pathway were eligible. Identified patients were given a questionnaire which included the Generalised Anxiety Disorder 7-item (GAD-7) Scale.
- The COVID pathway was initiated if patients met COVID-19 criteria set out in HPSC guidance[1] including fever, cough and/or shortness of breath.
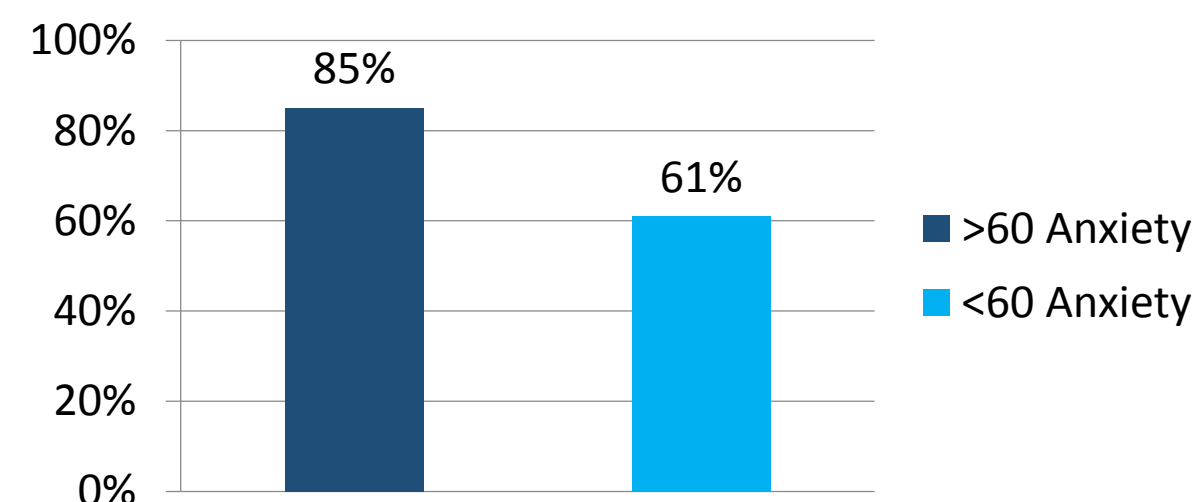
Results

Age

Sex
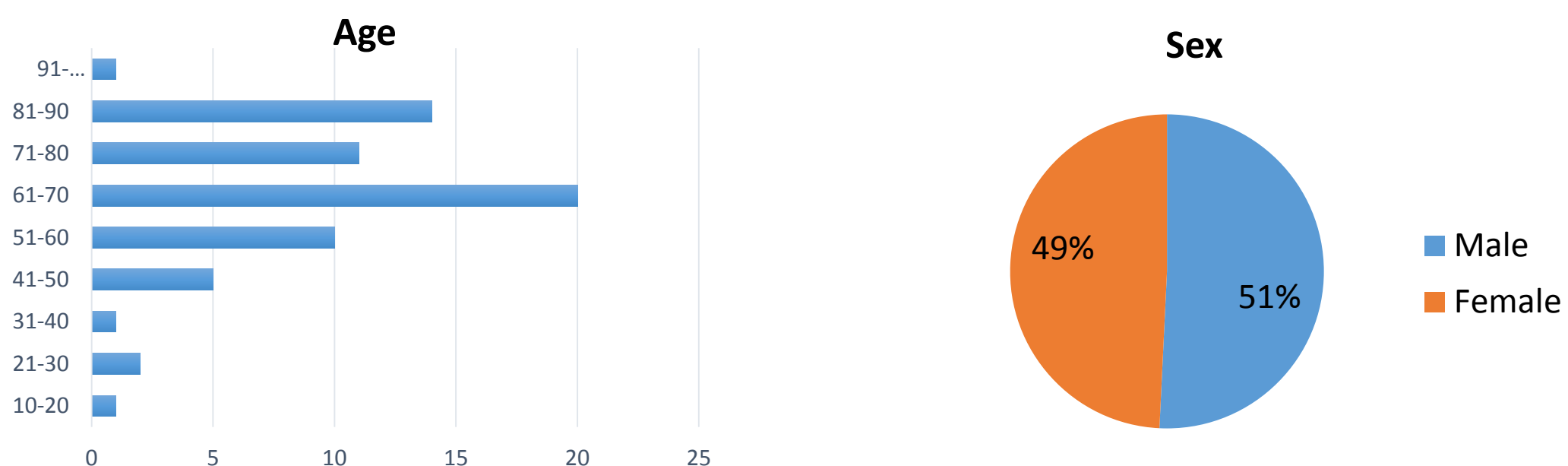
Sixty-five patients consented and all were included. Mean age was 66y[Range:18-91y], 47 (72%) were >60years and 33(51%) were male.
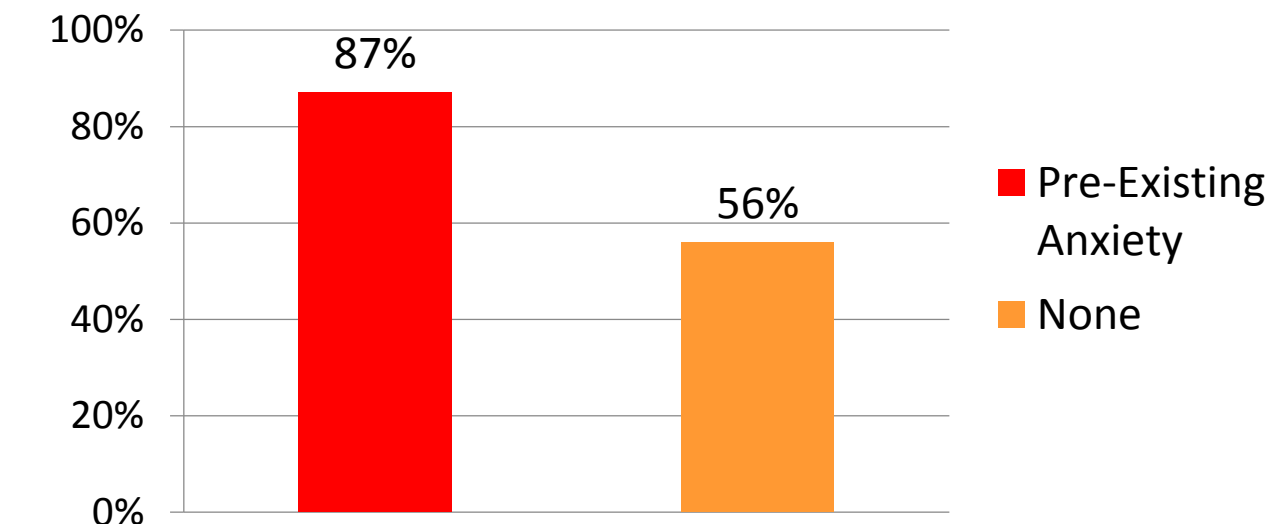
Co-Morbidity
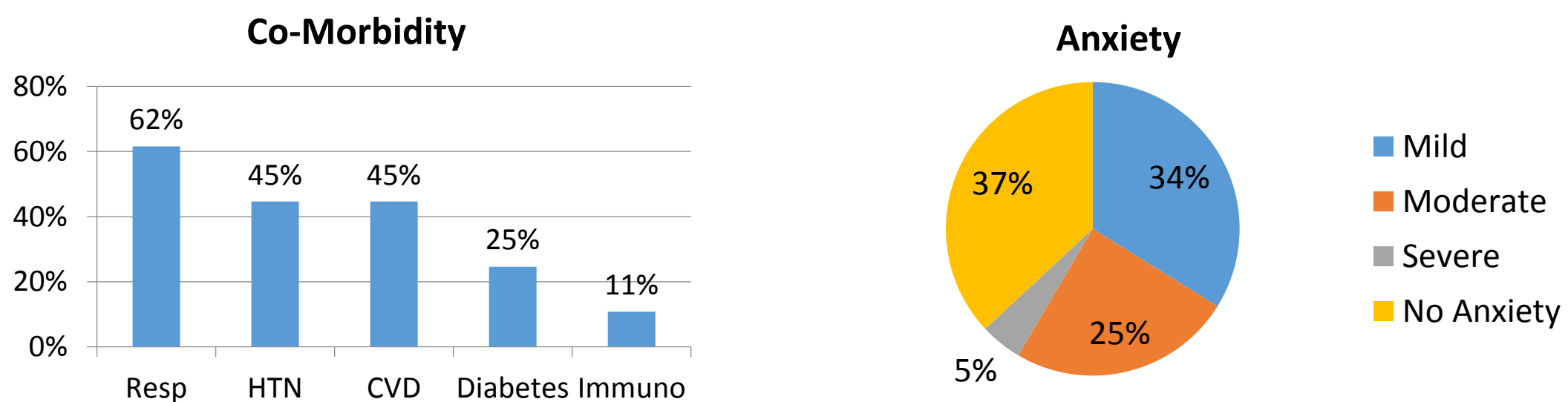
Anxiety

Sixty-one patients(94%) had at least one high risk co-morbidity, respiratory disease being the most common [40(62%)]. 41(63%) had anxiety and 19(29%) had moderate-severe symptoms.
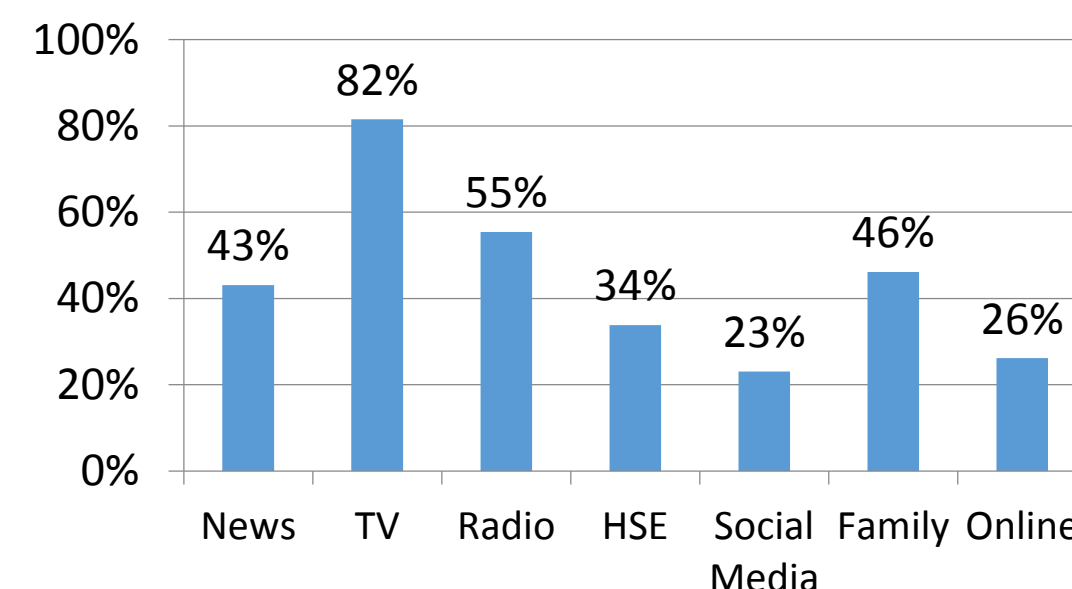
Anxiety Age Groups

Pre-existing anxiety

- Anxiety symptoms were more common in older patients and in those with pre-existing anxiety ([>60 years 40 (85%) vs < 60 years 11 (61%), P=0.0370] [Pre-existing anxiety 13 (87%) vs 28 (56%), (P=0.0363)]).
- Mean anxiety scores were similar between all co-morbidity groups; ($F_{(4,116)}=0.2795$, P=0.8907).

Sources of Information

- Television (TV) 53 (82%) and radio 25 (55%) were the most commonly used information source in all ages [TV; >60years 40 (85%) vs <60 years 13 (72%), P=0.2341], [Radio; >60 years 28 (60%) vs <60 years 8 (44%), P=0.2737].
- Mean anxiety scores were similar between all sources used ($F_{(6,194)}=0.1796$, P=0.98216).

Conclusion

- A high proportion of patients experienced anxiety.
- Patients of older age or with pre-existing anxiety had higher rates of anxiety.
- Neither gender nor high-risk co-morbidities affected anxiety levels.
- More traditional sources of information, TV and Radio were the most commonly used in all age groups.
- The source of information used did not affect anxiety levels

References

1. Health Protection Surveillance Centre 'COVID-19 case definitions' 2020. Available at: https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/casedefinitions/