

SATISFACTION GUARANTEED? THE URODYNAMIC EXPERIENCE

Aims of Study

Urodynamics remains the investigation of choice for women with lower urinary tract dysfunction. There is an assumption that the test is intrusive and invasive leading to patient anxiety and dissatisfaction (1). The role of urodynamic investigation remains controversial and there is continued debate (2), (3) regarding their use prior to treatment in women with lower urinary tract symptoms. This is particularly relevant when conservative management is planned. However these debates often do not include the patients' preference to have the opportunity for a definitive diagnosis before treatment commences. In view of this, and as part of ongoing departmental audit, we chose to look at patient satisfaction with particular reference to the acceptability of these invasive investigations.

Methods

Women were recruited prospectively from a one-stop urodynamic clinic in a tertiary referral Urogynaecology Unit. All complained of troublesome lower urinary tract symptoms and had been referred for further investigation and management. All women underwent videocystourethrography and were then asked to complete a structured satisfaction questionnaire including questions related to provision of information and questions concerning fears, anxieties and well-being throughout the procedure.

Results

In total 100 consecutive women, aged 18 –80, were recruited over a two-month period and 78 (78%) questionnaires were completed and returned. The majority (54%) were referred by their GP and in 76% of cases this was their first visit [Figure 1].

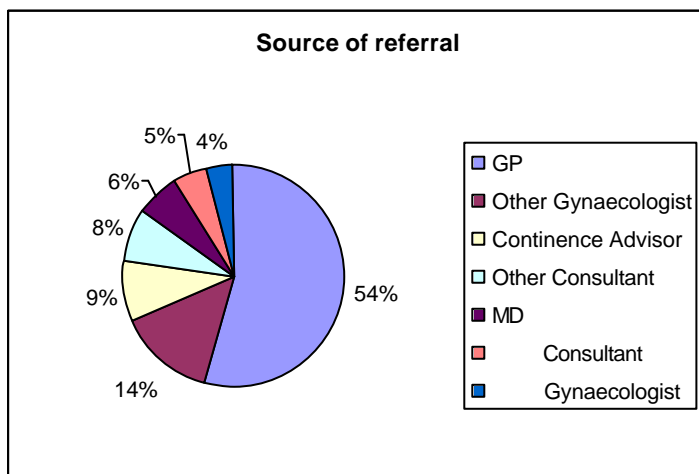


Figure 1: Source of Patient Referral

Most women (86%) received written information regarding the investigation prior to arrival; 90% found this accurate and 98% found it helpful. Prior to the investigation 90% of women felt they had adequate time to discuss their urinary symptoms and 95% felt the test had been fully explained. During the procedure 87% felt staff were sensitive to their fears and anxieties, 92% felt safe and comfortable and 93% had adequate privacy [Figure 2]. Afterwards 91% felt their results were fully discussed and 83% had a treatment plan formalized. The overall satisfaction rate was 92%.

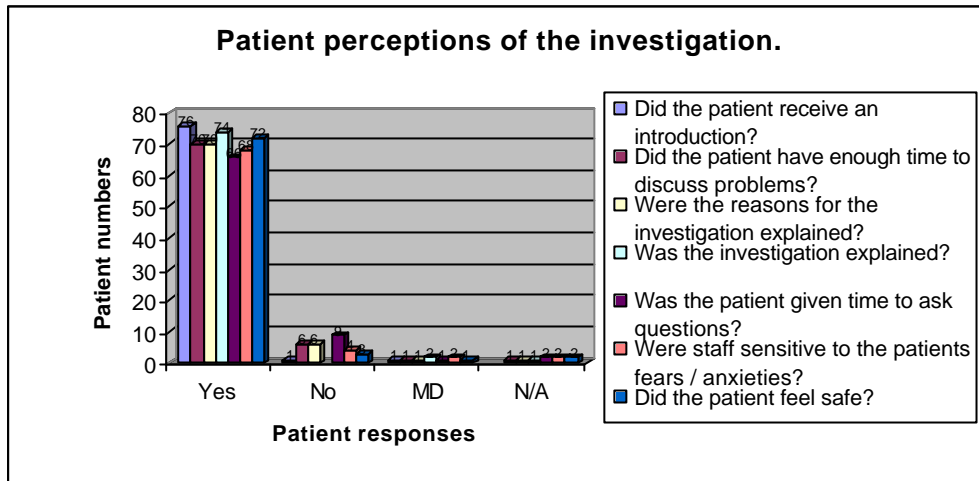


Figure 2: Perceptions of the Investigation

Conclusions

Despite the invasive and intrusive nature of the investigation our findings would suggest that a one-stop urodynamic clinic offers high levels of patient satisfaction in addition to providing an efficient, patient orientated service. The majority of women find the investigations acceptable and worthwhile. To complete the audit cycle and maintain standards within the department we aim to re-audit the service in the near future with a particular emphasis on patient needs and expectations.

References

1. Neurourol Urodynam 1997 16(5): 509 –510
2. Proceedings of 26th International Urogynaecology Association Meeting. Melbourne, Australia. December 2001.
3. Proceedings of 7th International Continence Society (UK). Belfast, UK. April 2000.