

Pain and quality of life of transfused adult thalassaemia patients in a tertiary Hospital in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Pain has emerged as a potential complication in thalassaemia as clinicians have seen increasing reports of chronic pain in thalassaemia patients. However, pain management had not been optimized, with 25% of patients reporting no relief with pain treatment. This study assessed the prevalence of pain, risk factors and its association with quality of life (QoL) in the adult transfused thalassaemia population. **Materials and Methods:** A prospective cross-sectional study was conducted from April to June 2023 in the thalassaemia clinic in Hospital Tengku Ampuan Rahimah, Klang. All adult patients aged 18 years old and above who have been treated with oral and/or subcutaneous infusion of iron chelators were conveniently sampled in this study. Data collection for pain and QoL were performed using the Brief Inventory Pain and TranQol questionnaire. Association between pain and QoL was explored using Fisher's Exact Test. **Results:** A total of 83 adults transfused thalassaemia patients were recruited. This study found 32% of the study participants had pain within the past 24 hours. Non-Hemoglobin E (HbE) beta thalassaemia was found to be a risk factor influencing pain in this study. This study found a significant association between pain and QoL ($p=0.01$). Taking oral deferiprone was independently associated with higher QoL. **Conclusion:** The prevalence of pain and its association with poor QoL may contribute to higher healthcare costs and loss of productivity. With the identification of the affecting variables of non HbE thalassaemia and taking oral deferiprone, appropriate treatment plan may be formulated for thalassaemia patients.