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Giving voice to patients – experiences during acute exacerbations of COPD

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Abstract

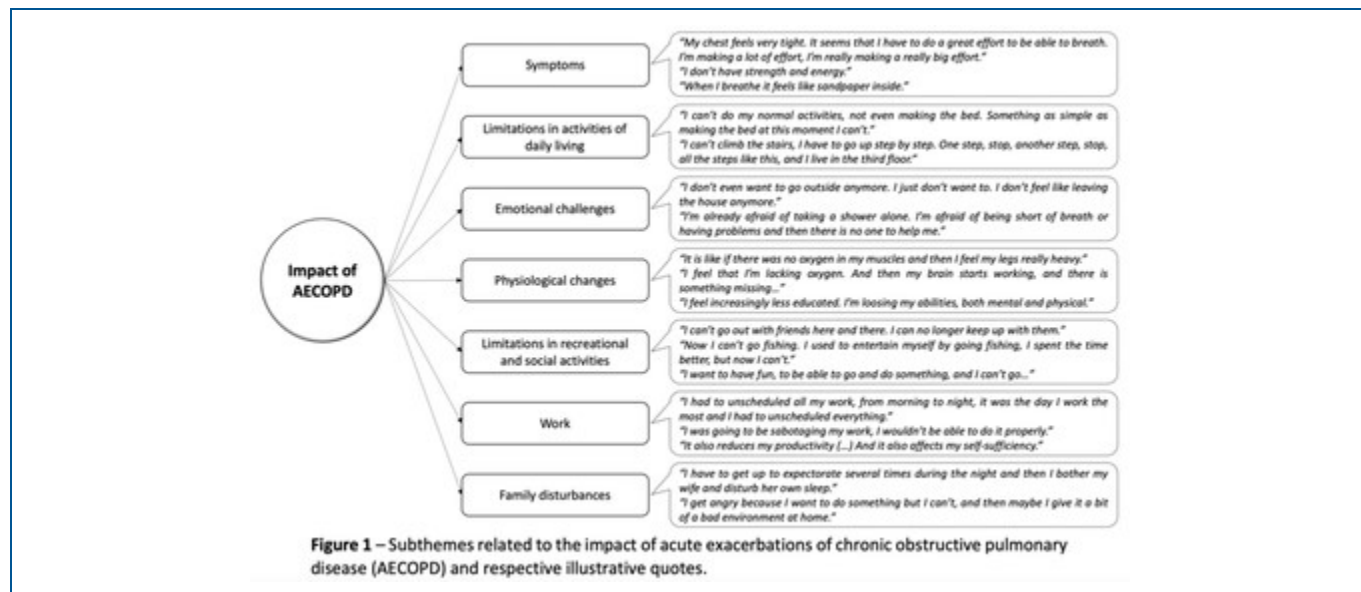
Background: Acute exacerbations of COPD (AECOPD) have a negative impact on patients' health status and disease progression, regardless of the severity. However, their clinical presentation is heterogenous and still little understood. Improving our understanding of AECOPD, during their occurrence, from patients' own lived experience may allow the development of person-centred interventions and enhance recovery. Thus, we aimed to explore patients' experiences during a mild to moderate AECOPD.

Methods: Semi-structured interviews with patients with a mild or moderate AECOPD treated in the community were conducted, at their homes, within 48h of the diagnosis. Interviews were audio recorded, transcribed in full and analysed by deductive thematic analysis using the Web Qualitative Data Analysis software. A preliminary analysis focused on the impact of AECOPD was conducted and illustrated with representative quotes.

Results: 11 patients (9 male, 67±10y, FEV1 41±16pp) participated. 7 subthemes demonstrating high impact of AECOPD emerged: symptoms, limitations in activities of daily living, emotional challenges, physiological changes, limitations in recreational and social activities, work and family disturbances (Fig. 1).

Conclusion: AECOPD, even when not requiring hospital admission, have a huge impact on patients' daily lives. This study contributes with a foundation for the development of meaningful person-centred interventions during

AECOPD.



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