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Puglia Parkinson Network: a clinical governance tool

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Introduction: Parkinson's disease (PD) is a chronic and progressive disorder characterized by motor and non-motor symptoms. It decreases the quality of life of both patients and their caregivers and places a heavy economic burden on society. PD affected 1-2 per 1000 of the population at any time, with a prevalence of 200-350/100.000 and an estimated incidence of 5-21/100.000/years.

Methods: PD patients' management requires a multidisciplinary approach. According to the National Chronicity Plan, approved by the State-Regions conference in September 2016, the care of patients with chronic diseases, such as PD, must be guaranteed through a network of care, including all specialists operating in territorial departments and in hospitals. For this aim, a dedicated board of the Puglia region has built a care network, which provides three levels of assistance organized according to a mixed model, internodal and hub-spoke. The Puglia Parkinson Network (PPN) provides specialized territorial departments' identification, managed by neurologists expert in movement disorders, which represent peripheral strategic points where the PD patients can refer to. The PPN network uses an informatic tool that allows to share all patients' information. At the first evaluation, patient's clinical data (history, neurological examination, diagnosis, Hoehn and Yahr score, UPDRS score, pharmacological treatment…) are collected. The above clinical data could be updated at every follow-up visit. Since March 2021, about 2000 patients were recruited. The PPN's digital tool can manage and monitor PD patients care, connecting general practitioners and neurologists, ensuring the systematization and digitalization of all care processes. Finally, the informatic tool allows the collection of clinical data that can be used for healthcare and scientific research in the epidemiological field.

Conclusions: PPN and its digital tool are a novel model for integrated diagnostic-therapeutic pathway, allowing multidisciplinary approach and sharing PD patients' data on a regional basis.