

AB080. 15. Insights into faecal incontinence among a healthy population in a tertiary referral centre

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Background: Faecal incontinence (FI) is the recurrent involuntary loss of faeces. It is a taboo subject associated with reduced quality of life (QoL). Common risk factors for FI include damaged pudendal nerve or sphincter complex from prior obstetric trauma or anal surgery.

FI is under reported and under diagnosed due to patients' reluctance to voluntarily discuss their symptoms with healthcare professionals. The aim of the study was to provide insights into FI among the population attending University Hospital Galway (UHG).

Methods: A survey was conducted between May-August 2018. Staff members and patients >18 years were recruited.

The Rome IV criteria for FI was utilized. Datapoints included demographics, co-morbidities, FI risk-factors, surgical/obstetric history. FI severity was determined by the Wexner Continence Scale.

Results: Two-hundred participants [female/male 124/76, median age 47 years (18–86 years)] were enrolled. Overall prevalence of FI was 31.5% (63/200). Eighty-one (40.5%) experienced some form of bowel dysfunction. Of the 81, 45 (55.5%) had discussed their FI symptoms with a healthcare professional. Seven percent (n=14) had severe-incontinence, 9% (n=18) had moderate-incontinence and 16% (n=31) had mild-incontinence. The FI cohort had significantly greater incidence of IBD Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD), Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) and previous bowel surgery (P<0.05).

Conclusions: Improvements in social awareness and knowledge regarding FI reporting and appropriate referral pathways is essential to counter social stigma and improve the lives of FI patients.

Keywords: Faecal incontinence; Rome IV criteria; Wexner Continence scale

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