PRACTICE OBSERVED

Defibrillators in general practice

C CLYDE, A KERR, A VARGHESE, A WILSON

Abstract

After a successful pilot scheme introduced in 1974, when the potential of the defibrillator as a means of providing health care was described, several general practices in the UK began using defibrillators. The present study describes the use of defibrillators in general practice over a two-year period. The total number of patients treated was 1506, of whom 83% had a history of at least one episode of cardiac arrhythmia. The defibrillator was of the automatic, external type, and the majority of treated patients (80%) were aged over 60 years. The study shows that the defibrillator is a useful and effective aid in the management of patients with cardiac arrhythmias.

Methods

Defibrillators were used in 15 general practices in the UK over a two-year period. The total number of patients treated was 1506, of whom 83% had a history of at least one episode of cardiac arrhythmia. The defibrillator was of the automatic, external type, and the majority of treated patients (80%) were aged over 60 years. The study shows that the defibrillator is a useful and effective aid in the management of patients with cardiac arrhythmias.

Results

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Discussion

Defibrillators, general practitioners, especially those with contacts in the health service, have shown interest in the use of defibrillators. There have been many reports about their safety, in particular when used blindly without electrocardiographic monitoring. It is clear from this study that the automatic, external defibrillator is a safe and effective aid in the management of patients with cardiac arrhythmias.

Papers That Have Changed My Practice

Researching drug treatment

CERDICK R MAHTY

I have been one of the researchers in the field of drug treatment and I have been involved in many studies. One of the papers that have changed my practice is the one published in 1984 in the British Medical Journal (BMJ). The study was conducted in the UK and involved the use of defibrillators in general practice.

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References


