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Health conditions and healthcare expenses among undergraduate students at Prince of Songkla University receiving medical care at Songklanagarind Hospital

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Background: As most of undergraduate student's health problem is preventable, health survey in this population is essential in developing a better health care system and implementing public health intervention.

Aim: To determine the incidence of diseases among undergraduate students at Prince of Songkla University receiving medical services at Songklanagarind Hospital's outpatient department or at Student Health Center and to evaluate the medical expenses of undergraduate students' visits in academic year 2013.

Method: in this retrospective study, we collected secondary data of all undergraduate students' visits at the outpatient department of Songklanagarind Hospital or at the Student Health Center between 1st June 2013 and 31st May 2014 from Songklanagarind Hospital Information System. Datasets consisted of hospital number, data of visit, clinic, ICD-10 code diagnosis, medical expenses, doctor code, date of birth, national and student ID. Data analysis was done using R program version 3.1.1.

Results: Top three causes of hospital visit of undergraduate students by ICD group are respectively respiratory disease, injury and health checkup. While, top three ICD-10 diagnoses are common cold, health checkup, and pharyngitis, with the incidence of 92.7, 69.9 and 44.3 per 1000 people respectively. Total medical expenses of all undergraduate students' visits in academic year 2013 that were covered by Songklanagarind Hospital were 169,523 USD. The median of expenses per person was 4.6 USD (IQR 22). The median of expenses per visit was 2.5 USD (IQR 6.1). Top three ICD groups with highest total medical costs were injury (34,673 USD), respiratory diseases (19,952 USD), and musculoskeletal diseases (14,668 USD), respectively.

Conclusion: Common diseases among undergraduate students are acute preventable diseases, the biggest problem being injury and respiratory disease. Injury is accounted for the highest total medical expenses among undergraduate students.