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Long term anticoagulation therapy management in Primary Health Care: a one year experience

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Background & Aim: Long term anticoagulant therapy for the prevention of Strokes in patients with atrial fibrillation is crucial. Although nowadays new oral anticoagulants may be an alternative to classic therapy with Vitamin K antagonists, its high price is still a barrier for many patients. General and Family Physicians can play an important role in monitoring the anticoagulation therapy given the proximity from the residence of their patients.

Method: Data regarding patients with the diagnosis of non-valvular atrial fibrillation with anticoagulation consultations in the Family Health Units (USF Salvador Lordelo and UCSP Tarouca) during the entire year of 2015 was studied. We analyzed data of these consultations, the patients and the control of International Normalization Ratio (INR) levels between the months of January and December of 2015.

Results: There were in total 120 patients with non-valvular atrial fibrillation registered in the Units. of these, 30 (25%) monitored their INR in these Units during 2015 with an average age of 73 years. There was a total of 389 consultations, an average of 13 consultations per patient. of the total INR results obtained, 66% were within the therapeutic target.

Conclusions: The data obtained indicates that it is possible that a large proportion of patients with non-valvular atrial fibrillation can be managed at a Primary Health Care Unit, in order to follow-up and control their anticoagulation therapy with economic benefits for the patients and for the National Health Service.