Abstract

Background: home enteral nutrition (HEN) is the best option for chronic patients without the ability to swallow, but with intact digestive tract. Despite the increasing use of home enteral tube feeding (HETF), there is little published information about the types of patients receiving home enteral nutrition. The purpose of this paper is to present the evolution of HETF. Material and methods: the retrospective multicenter observational study was performed using questionnaires, which were distributed among the biggest Polish HEN centres. The study covered all patients treated between January, 2007 and January, 2014. Results: in total 196 adult patients in 2008 (M:104, F: 92, mean age 58.1 [41-75]) and 2842 in 2013 (M: 1541, F: 1301, mean age 61.4 range: 1-91) were assessed. The number of patients grew significantly between 2008 and 2013 (p < 0.05), rising from 196 up to 2842 (and 1716 at the moment of study). The predominant primary disease was neurology in both time periods, but the profile switched from neurovascular to neurodegenerative (p > 0.05). Percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy was the most common GI access (> 60%), its use and the use of gastrostomies increased significantly since 2008 (p < 0.05). Although the reimbursement for HETF started in 2007, HEN centres expressed doubts about unclear rules for the qualification to HEN and its use. Conclusions: HETF is a safe, well-tolerated and cost-effective procedure. The profile of patients and techniques may vary at the beginning, but becomes similar to other HETF countries relatively soon. The number of patients grows quickly, and that fact suggests that the prevalence of HETF is similar in all countries.

Keywords

Home nutrition, Enteral nutrition, Artificial nutrition.