

Trainees' Knowledge and Attitudes Towards In-patient Management of Hyperemesis Gravidarum

Parnell L, Figueiredo S, Lyon-Dean C

Department of Obstetrics, Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle upon Tyne



The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

OBJECTIVES

Hyperemesis Gravidarum (HG) is a debilitating condition affecting up to 4% of pregnant women. It consists of unremitting vomiting not responsive to oral antiemetic therapy, leading to dehydration and weight loss. Untreated, it can cause malnutrition, intrauterine growth restriction and low birth weight, and can significantly impact maternal mental well-being. Recent studies have suggested dissatisfaction among sufferers, who reported feeling like they were not treated with dignity or respect, and lack of understanding from medical staff regarding the debilitating nature of HG. Additionally, they felt there may be potential underuse of certain medications such as ondansetron and oral steroids.

METHODS

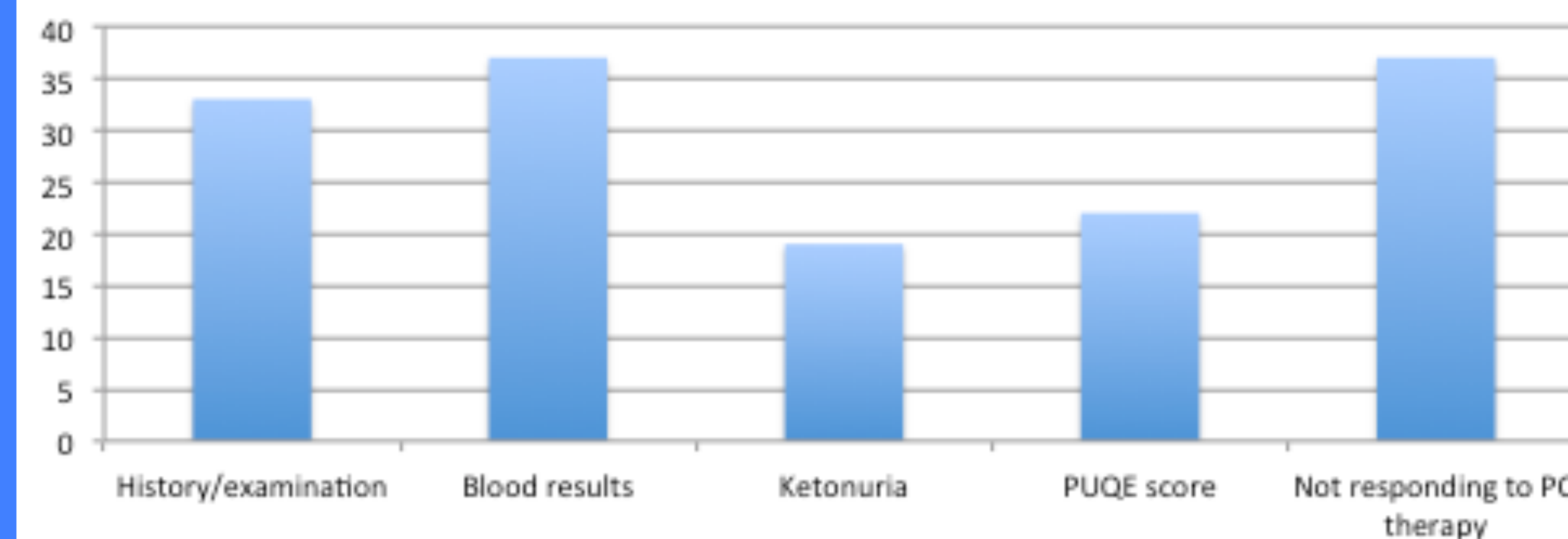
The understanding of the psychological implications and hospital management of HG was assessed via a survey of trainees working in Obstetrics and Gynaecology in the Northern Deanery, distributed using an online questionnaire via the 'SurveyMonkey' collection tool.

RESULTS

40 responses were received across a range of training grades. 70% reported themselves as feeling 'extremely confident' or 'very confident' managing this condition.

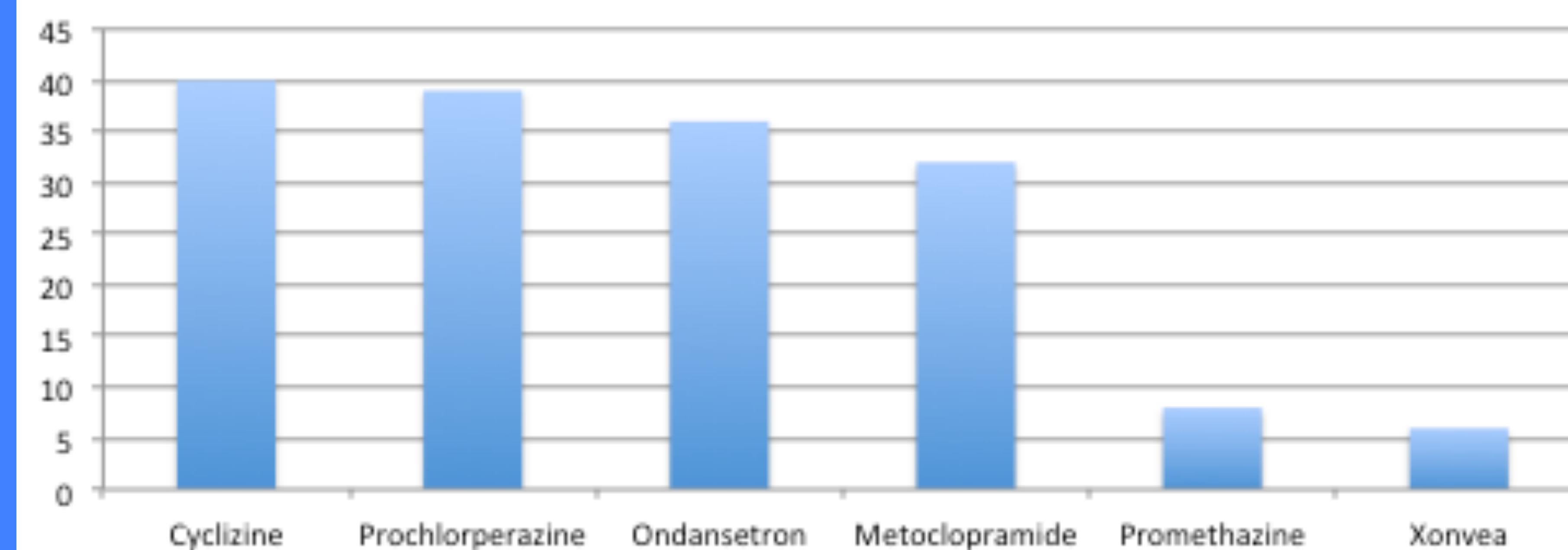
ADMISSION

The following factors were taken into consideration when deciding to admit a patient with HG. Of note – 48% of clinicians still use ketonuria in their assessment.



MEDICATIONS

Trainees were confident with a wide range of medications; however, only 57% felt confident prescribing Ondansetron in the first trimester. All but one reported they would counsel regarding small increased risk of cleft lip/palate with this medication.



INPATIENT MANAGEMENT

35% of trainees were confident that Thiamine was offered at their units, with half believing it to be used to prevent Wernicke's encephalopathy if vomiting protracted.

Most trainees were aware of the indication and benefit of oral steroid therapy.

PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT

95% of trainees recognised that HG was 'very debilitating', with two respondents suggesting it to be 'moderately debilitating'.

7% were confident their unit offered psychological support, with 40% reporting this did not happen. 53% were unsure – suggesting that they either did not initiate or were not aware of a referral process.

CONCLUSION

Trainees reported good knowledge of antiemetic therapy, but more evidence based education could improve understanding of Ondansetron safety and risk profile, and improve other in-patient treatments.

Trainees understand the debilitating nature of this condition however improved awareness of and access to psychological support is essential.