THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF COGNITIVE DECLINE IN PD

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Introduction: Parkinson's disease (PD) is characterized by both motor and non-motor symptoms, including an 80% lifetime-risk of becoming demented. However, little is known about the economic impact of reduced cognitive state in patients with PD.

Aim: We investigated to what extent cognitive impairment and dementia was a cost driving factor to the direct medical and non-medical costs in PD.

Method: Sixty one patients with PD without dementia at baseline were followed over eight years with clinical examinations in 1993, 1997 and 2001. Data about disease severity, cognitive state, and the use of health care and social services were collected during this period.

Results: Mean direct costs per year of survival (YOS) were EUR 17 813. Patients with dementia had 3.3 times higher costs with EUR 34 980 versus EUR 10 626 per YOS. With 67% of the direct costs institutional care was the biggest cost factor. The cognitive state as measured by Mini Mental State Examination predicted costs by 30%. Cognitive decline was associated with higher non-medical costs, even in non-demented patients with PD.

Conclusion: Dementia has a substantial impact on direct costs in PD, mainly due to high costs for institutional care. In addition, there were indications that even in non-demented patients, cognitive impairment seemed to be associated with higher non-medical costs.