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Frailty Risk Assessment on Outpatients and Home Patients by a Health Support Pharmacy

Manami Kondo [1], Kimiko Nakajima [2], Izumi Tsuda [3], Masaaki Yamada [3], Kayo Nishioka [3], Noritake Hirota [1]

1)General incorporated association Osaka PharmaPlan Aozora Pharmacy
2)General incorporated association Osaka PharmaPlan Kotsuma Pharmacy
3)General incorporated association Osaka PharmaPlan Natsume Pharmacy

【About frailty】

Frailty is a clinical state in which there is an increase in an individual's vulnerability for developing dependency and/or mortality when exposed to a stressor. Frailty can occur as the result of a range of diseases and medical conditions, but this syndrome can be delayed, if identified and managed early enough.

【Background and objective】

Frailty in Japan is defined as a state of reduced resilience to stress due to age related loss of reserve capacity. Although numerous reports have been published on frailty evaluation and effectiveness, no frailty study has been made yet on home patients. Therefore, as a health support pharmacy, we attempted a frailty risk assessment comparing outpatients and home patients in order to consider future frailty countermeasures.

【Methods】

The target was set after obtaining consent on outpatients aged 65 years or older who use the pharmacy and home patients who receive regular home visits and services from their medical institution and by our pharmacist. The survey was conducted from October 1 to 30, 2020, and assessment was made utilizing the Questionnaire for the Late Stage Elderly by the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare, Japan.

・Prescription medications Surveys
We examined prescribed medications based on patients' medication history information and compared the use of diabetes medications, osteoporosis medications, and benzodiazepines that may affect the risk of frailty between the two groups.

【Results】

The survey was conducted on 31 outpatient and 33 home patient. The mean age was not significantly different between the two groups. The rate of living alone was significantly higher for home group($p<0.001$). In the frailty risk assessment, smoking rate was significantly different and 41.9 % for outpatient group and 9.1 % for home group($p<0.001$). No significant differences were found for other items, and satisfaction with daily life showed high tendency in both groups (Table 1).

・Prescription medications Surveys
In a comparison of the number of prescribed medications , the average number of prescribed medications was 5.7 in the outpatient and 7.5 in the home patient, which tended to be significantly higher at home patient($p=0.0369$) There was no significant difference between the two groups when comparing the use of diabetes medication, Osteoporosis medications, and benzodiazepines(Table 2).
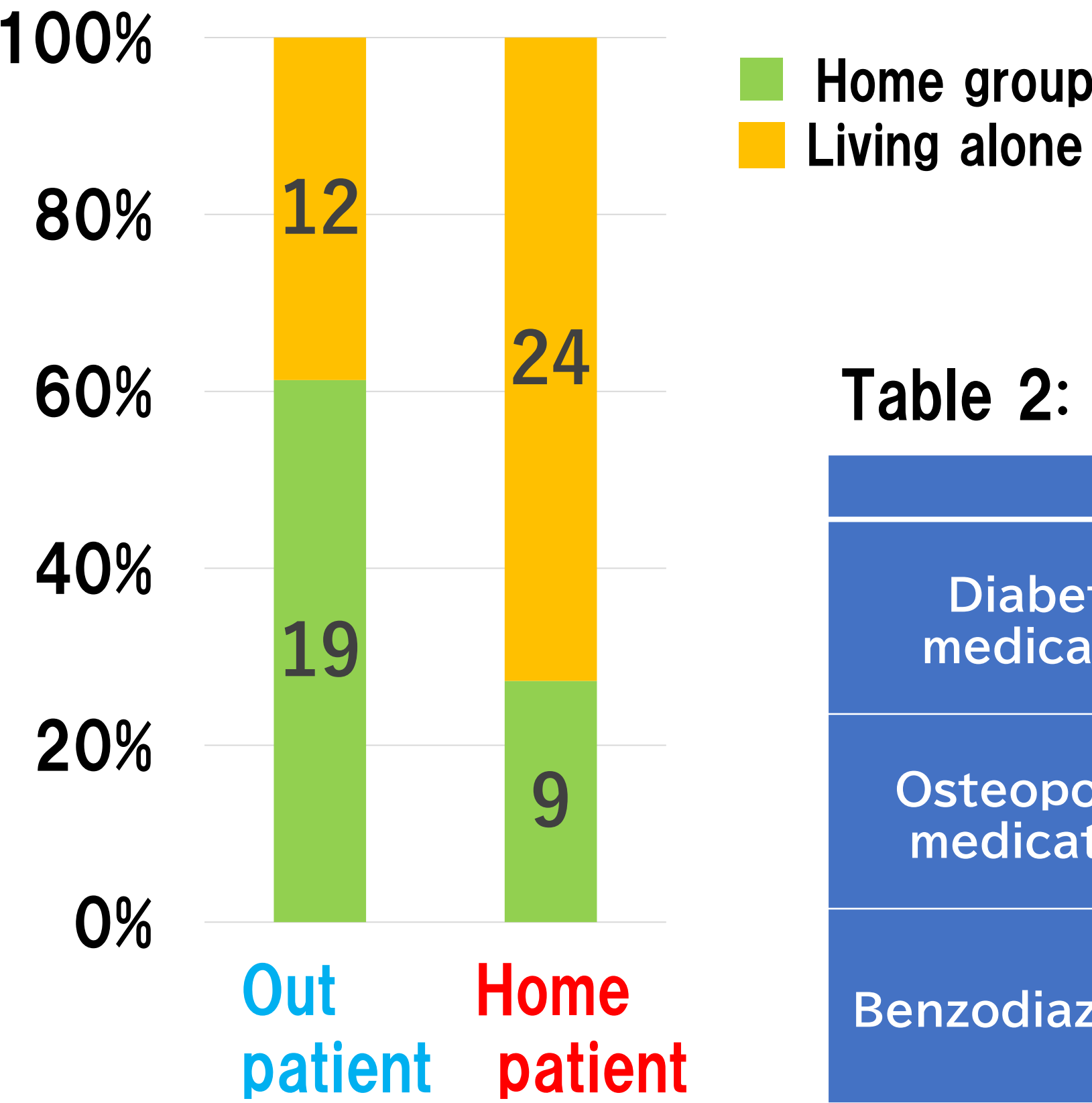
Table 1: Frailty Risk Assessment

Q1 How is your current health condition?

	Good	Somewhat good	Normal	Not very good	Not good	p-value
Outpatient	7 （22.6%）	5 （16.1%）	16 （51.6%）	2 （6.5%）	1 （3.2%）	0.116
Home patient	11 （32.4%）	2 （5.9%）	13 （38.2%）	8 （23.5%）	0 （0.0%）	

Q2 Are you satisfied with your daily life?

	Satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Somewhat unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	p-value
Outpatient	11 （35.5%）	15 （48.4%）	4 （12.9%）	1 （3.2%）	0.711
Home patient	14 （41.2%）	12 （35.3%）	5 （14.7%）	3 （8.8%）	

		Yes	No	p-value
Q3 Do you regularly eat three meals a day?	Outpatient	24 （77.4%）	7 （22.6%）	0.326
	Home patient	30 （88.2%）	4 （11.8%）	
Q4 Compared to 6 months ago, do you find it more difficult to eat tough or solid foods(※)? ※Dried shredded squid, pickled radish daikon, etc.	Outpatient	10 （32.2%）	21 （67.8%）	0.607
	Home patient	14 （41.2%）	20 （58.8%）	
Q5 Do you find yourself choking on tea or soup?	Outpatient	9 （29.0%）	22 （71.0%）	0.228
	Home patient	51 （14.7%）	29 （85.3%）	
Q6 Have you lost 2-3kg or more in the past 6 months?	Outpatient	10 （32.3%）	21 （67.7%）	0.252
	Home patient	6 （17.6%）	28 （82.4%）	
Q7 Do you think your walking speed has slowed down as compared to before?	Outpatient	21 （67.7%）	10 （32.3%）	1.000
	Home patient	24 （70.6%）	10 （29.4%）	
Q8 Have you fallen down previously in the past year?	Outpatient	9 （29.0%）	22 （71.0%）	1.000
	Home patient	10 （29.4%）	24 （70.6%）	
Q9 Do you exercise (take walks etc.) at least once a week?	Outpatient	21 （67.7%）	10 （32.3%）	0.444
	Home patient	19 （55.9%）	15 （44.1%）	
Q10 Do people around you comment on your forgetfulness e.g. say to you, "You are always asking the same thing.	Outpatient	8 （25.8%）	23 （74.2%）	0.434
	Home patient	12 （35.3%）	22 （64.7%）	
Q11 There are times when you don't remember today's date.	Outpatient	13 （41.9%）	18 （58.1%）	0.618
	Home patient	12 （35.3%）	22 （64.7%）	

		I smoke	I don't smoke	I quit	p-value
Q12 Do you smoke?	Outpatient	13 （41.9%）	18 （58.1%）	0 （0.0%）	< 0.001
	Home patient	4 （11.8%）	18 （52.9%）	12 （35.3%）	

		Yes	No	p-value
Q13 Do you go out at least once a week?	Outpatient	28 （90.3%）	3 （9.7%）	0.479
	Home patient	28 （82.4%）	6 （17.6%）	
Q14 Do you regularly meet with family or friends?	Outpatient	28 （90.3%）	3 （9.7%）	0.710
	Home patient	29 （85.3%）	5 （14.7	
Q15 When you are not feeling well, do you have someone close by to talk to?	Outpatient	30 （96.8%）	1 （3.2%）	0.357
	Home patient	30 （88.2%）	4 （11.8%）	

Table 2: Use of medications that may affect frailty

		Outpatient	Home patient	p-value
Diabetes medication	Using	11(35.5%)	8(24.2%)	0.414
	Not using	20(64.5%)	25(75.8%)	
Osteoporosis medications	Using	10(32.3%)	10(30.3%)	1.000
	Not using	21(67.7%)	23(69.7%)	
Benzodiazepines	Using	7(22.6%)	10(30.3%)	0.576
	Not using	24(77.4%)	23(69.7%)	

【Conclusions】

The results of this survey showed no significant differences in frailty risk between outpatients and home patients, and in general, patients were highly satisfied with their daily lives. As a health support pharmacy, we would like to further investigate the background condition of patient regarding frailty risk.