

ABSTRACT

Oral health problems are one of the most common forms of chronic diseases, and the burden of oral and dental disease fall disproportionately on large numbers of racial and ethnic minorities, and fall heaviest on marginalized people from lower socioeconomic groups. Even to receive free health services, direct non-medical costs and indirect cost could be barriers for seeking care. This study intended to measure cost incurred by dental treatments in dental OPD of San-Pya General Hospital. It was a cross-sectional descriptive study. Patient costs were collected by conducting face-to-face interview with 107 dental OPD patients. For estimation of provider cost, the hospital's administrative records for 2014-2015 budget year were reviewed using a proforma developed based on WHO's Cost It (costing intervention template).

The OPD clinic was attended by various age groups starting from 4 to 87 years. However, the number of patients 14 years or older (93, 86.9%) was six times higher than that of the patients younger than 14 years of age (14, 13.1%). More than half were female patients (65, 60.7%) and dependent (55, 51.4%). Dental caries and eruption disorders were the key problems among the patients younger than 14 years (13, 92.9%), while untreated caries and periodontal diseases were the major dental problems of adult patients (84, 78.5%). Dental extraction is the most frequent treatments in both age groups.

Cost incurred by dental patients was different depending on type of treatment. Although a few people (4, 4.3%) underwent dental prosthesis, it was the most expensive treatment procedure which incurred 59,400 kyats per visit. The commonest procedure, dental extraction, costed 5,745.5 kyats per visit. In total, without considering dental prosthesis cost, dental OPD patients had to expend 5,474.1 kyats per-visit, in which direct medical cost per visit was 1215.9 kyats (22.2%), direct non-medical cost per visit was 2209.7 kyats (40.4%) and indirect cost was 2048.5 kyats (37.4%).

The average cost of dental treatments were not statistically different between different age groups ($p=0.474$). Although calculation of unit cost was based only on a single visit, there were six dental patients expended more than 10% of their monthly