Thirty-five Years of Heart Transplantation in Medellín: A Colombian Survival Report

Objectives: Heart failure in Colombia, as with other developing counties, is an important cause of diminished quality of life for both patients and family in addition to a significant and high financial burden to healthcare. Here, we provide a descriptive report of heart transplantation survival from Colombia's epicenter of cardiac transplantation.

Methods: We conducted a retrospective cohort of all patients taken to heart transplantation at the Cardio VID Clinic in Medellín, Colombia between December 1985 to January 2021. Patient information from our institutional database and transplant archives were retrieved and reviewed.

Results: From December 1985 to January 2021, a total of 579 patients, both adult and pediatric, underwent orthotopic heart transplantation at our institution in Medellín, Colombia. Median transplant recipient age was 49±5 years; of these, 484 (84,0%) were men and 92 (15,9%) were women. Heart disease etiology leading to transplantation was: idiopathic cardiomyopathy in 208 (36,1%) patients, ischemic cardiomyopathy in 180 (31,2%) patients, and valvular cardiomyopathy in 53 (9,2%) patients. Overall survival at 1 year, 5 years and 10 years were 71,3%, 50,7% and 36,5% respectively. Conclusion: In this Colombian survival report, primary cause for increased mortality in our setting was the remote residence (rural) of patients which delays early identification of symptoms and thus prompt intervention. Despite the developing nature of our country's healthcare, optimal treatment and networking strategies can be implemented to establish successful transplant departments in these settings.

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