

Analysis of the growth of outpatient services in rehabilitation-related therapy

Objectives: To examine the distribution and growth of outpatient rehabilitation-related therapies at various accreditation levels of medical institutions. **Methods:** Outpatient service data related to rehabilitation therapy from January to April in 1997 and 1998 were obtained from the Bureau of National Health Insurance. The data from different therapies and accreditation levels of institution were processed and analyzed. **Results:** The results showed that the growth rates in total payment and utilization frequency were 39.7% and 28.1% respectively. Physical therapy (PT) service led all the other therapies in payment and utilization frequency accounting for 90% of the total amount. Occupational and speech therapy (OT and ST) were used relatively less, but the growth rates were higher. The growth rates in amount of money spent for OT, ST, and PT were 50.5%, 39.6% and 36.8% respectively; and the growth rates in service for OT, ST, and PT were 33.7%, 30.4% and 19.7% respectively. Simple-moderate physical therapy items increased from 46.3% to 77.2% in the level of clinics was the most remarkable finding among all the growth rates. **Conclusions:** Physical therapist can be the gatekeeper of rehabilitation services. Personnel in physical therapy should be involved in the process of evaluation and reimbursement of rehabilitation-related service since physical therapy comprises the majority of rehabilitation-related therapies. (*Chin J Public Health. (Taipei):2000;19(1):61-65*)

Key words: *Rehabilitation-related therapy, health insurance payment, outpatient services*