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Title: Influence of pulmonary rehabilitation in patients with COPD in respiratory hospital admissions (Rha) and emergency department visits (EDv)

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Body: Introduction: Pulmonary Rehabilitation (PR) provides significant clinical benefits to patients with severe and very severe COPD Objectives: To verify the effect of PR on COPD patients in our Hospital, not only in terms of Lung Function Tests but also in Rha and EDv. Methods: 148 patients were studied, 106 started PR from January 2009 to October 2010 and 42 did not. We compared EDv and Rha of patients for one year before and after receiving PR and also with the patients who did not. Changes in FEV1 and in 6MWT (6-minute walk test) were also studied. Results:

Data of 106 patients who followed PR

	Before PR	After PR
EDv*	145	74
Rha	45	27
FEV1*	38.35	41.33
6MWT*	353.95	394.60

*statistically significant

Data of 42 patients who did not followed PR

	Jan 2008-09	Oct 2010-11
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EDv	79	81
Rha	17	30
FEV1	37.81	NA
6MWT	331.2	NA

Both EDv and Rha show a decrease, being statistically significant in the case of EDv. Also FEV1 and 6MWT show a statistically significant improvement. Conclusions: PR is an effective intervention in treating COPD patients, as it results in significant clinical improvements by increasing capacity to perform physical exercise and by lowering EDv and Rha rates.