

The nurse's role in organizing a cardiology outpatient clinic: a collaboration between the Health Centre Brod-Posavina County and the General Hospital "Dr Josip Benčević"

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In order to improve the availability of specialist cardiology care at the primary healthcare level, a cardiology outpatient clinic was established in 2022 within the Health Centre Brod-Posavina County. The clinic operates in cooperation with five cardiologists from the General Hospital "Dr Josip Benčević", enabling early detection, diagnosis, and monitoring of cardiac patients without the need for hospital referrals.^{1,2} The nurse plays a key role in the daily organization of the clinic. Responsibilities include scheduling patients for consultations and diagnostic procedures such as 12-lead electrocardiogram, blood pressure measurement, 24-hour Holter ECG and blood pressure monitoring, exercise stress testing, and cardiac ultrasound. The nurse also organizes follow-up appointments, maintains patient records, and ensures timely communication regarding appointments and preparation for procedures.

In the period from September 2022 to September 2025, a total of 1.039 patients were examined. The following procedures were performed: 1.376 24-hour ECG Holter monitorings, 451 blood pressure Holter monitorings, 968 echocardiograms, 237 exercise stress tests and 1.051 standard ECGs. One of the nurse's most important tasks is ensuring effective communication and collaboration between family medicine teams and cardiology specialists. This facilitates timely diagnosis and treatment and reduces the need for hospital admissions.

The role of the nurse in this model goes beyond traditional nursing duties and includes workflow coordination, communication with patients and healthcare professionals, as well as patient education regarding medication adherence and lifestyle changes. Experience from the first three years of clinic operation indicates that this organizational model significantly improves access to and the quality of cardiology care at the primary level, with high patient satisfaction.

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LITERATURE

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