|  |
| --- |
| **Navigating the COVID-19 pandemic: Experiences and self-management approaches adopted by people with interstitial lung disease** |
| Gabriella Tikellis1,2, Tamera Corte2,3,4, Ian N. Glaspole1,2,5, Nicole S.L. Goh5,6,7,8, Yet H Khor1,5,6,7, Jeremy Wrobel9,10, Karen Symons5, Lisa Fuhrmeister6,7, Laura Glenn3,4, Shiji Chirayath9, Lauren K. Troy 2,3,4, Bill King1, Anne E. Holland1,2,7,11 |
| *1. Respiratory Research@Alfred, Central Clinical School, Monash University, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia* *2. NHMRC Centre of Research Excellence in Pulmonary Fibrosis, Sydney, Australia**3. Respiratory Medicine, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Sydney, Australia**4. The University of Sydney, Central Clinical School, Sydney, NSW, Australia* *5. Department of Respiratory Medicine, Alfred Health, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia**6. Department of Respiratory and Sleep Medicine, Austin Health, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia**7. Institute for Breathing and Sleep, Melbourne, Australia* *8. Faculty of Medicine, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia**9. Advanced Lung Disease Unit, Fiona Stanley Hospital, Perth, Western Australia, Australia**10. School of Medicine, University of Notre Dame Australia, Fremantle, Western Australia, Australia**11. Department of Physiotherapy, Alfred Health, Melbourne, Australia* |
| **Introduction/Aim:** People with interstitial lung disease (ILD) were deemed more vulnerable to the SARS-CoV-2 virus and isolated as a means of reducing risk of infection. This study examined the impact of the pandemic on daily life, psychological wellbeing and access to healthcare and identified approaches undertaken to remain safe**.****Methods:** Four specialist clinics in tertiary centres in Australia (Victoria:2 sites; New South Wales: 1 site; Western Australia: 1 site) recruited patients with ILD during an 8-week period from March 2021. Semi-structured telephone interviews were conducted with transcripts analysed using principles of grounded theory.**Results:** 90 participants were interviewed between April and December 2021. Participants were predominantly female, former smokers with an average age of 66 years. IPF and connective tissue-ILD being the most common subtypes. Five main themes were identified: vulnerability; reduced social interaction and isolation, access to healthcare services and support, staying active; emotional and psychological impact. Self-management strategies included staying active both physically and mentally.**Conclusion:** Self-management was key to managing the impact of the pandemic. In combination with advances in technology, implementation of strategies for monitoring wellbeing and support for self-management provides an opportunity to leverage the lessons learnt to ensure a more individualised model of care for people with ILD.**Acknowledgements:** The study acknowledges the time and contribution of all participants who shared their lived experiences on which the study findings are based.**Grant Support:** NHMRC Centre of Research Excellence in PF (GNT1116371 |