

# MISSED APPOINTMENTS IN STROKE CARE: PATTERNS, IMPACT ON RECOVERY, COSTS, AND CLINICAL EFFICIENCY

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## Introduction

- Missed appointments are a common challenge in stroke rehabilitation, potentially delaying recovery and reducing the effectiveness of interventions.
- These absences can also increase healthcare costs and disrupt the efficiency of clinical services.
- Examining the patterns and consequences of missed appointments among stroke survivors is essential to inform strategies that improve adherence, ensure efficient resource allocation, and enhance patient outcomes.

## Purpose

- This study examined the patterns and impact of missed appointments among stroke survivors on cost, recovery, and clinical efficiency.

## Methods

- Conducted a 10-year retrospective review of 256 stroke survivors attending outpatient physiotherapy at a Nigerian tertiary hospital (2015–2024).
- Data collected included missed appointments, age, gender, occupation, location, and mode of payment.
- Financial impact: Total revenue loss from missed appointments was calculated by multiplying the number of missed appointments by the cost per session.
- Clinical efficiency: Assessed using the ratio of current assets to current liabilities.
- Recovery outcomes: Recovery times for patients were estimated to evaluate the effect of missed appointments.



## Results

- Total missed appointments: 2,108 over the 10-year period.
- Peak periods: Highest rates in December/January and in 2022.
- Patient characteristics: Greatest proportions among ischaemic stroke patients (88.9%) and those with left-sided affectation (54.2%).
- Clinic efficiency: Overall efficiency was 0.65.
- Economic impact: Cumulative revenue loss of ₦4,216,000 (≈ \$2,903).
- Clinical impact: Estimated 34.8% of missed visits could delay recovery by 4,216 days (using a 2-day delay per missed session).

## Conclusion

- Missed appointments for stroke survivors led to notable challenges, leading to increased costs, inefficiency, and delayed recovery.
- The economic burden of non-attendance underscores the need for targeted interventions to improve appointment adherence thereby improving health outcomes of stroke survivors.

## References

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