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## A Survey in the Treatment of Generalised Anxiety Disorder and Comorbid Major Depression by Venezuelan Psychiatrists

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**Introduction:** Anxiety disorders and depression are major world-wide health problems. In the US National Comorbidity Survey, lifetime prevalence of anxiety and mood disorders were 28.8% and 20.8%, respectively <sup>1</sup>. High levels of comorbidity are seen between anxiety disorders and major depression (MD) <sup>2</sup> It is well reported that individuals with comorbid generalised anxiety disorder (GAD) and MD are significantly more likely to remain symptomatic than individuals with depression or generalised anxiety disorder alone <sup>3</sup>

**Objectives:** To investigate the use of different pharmacological strategies in the management of GAD and MD.

**Aims:** To gain insight into the local current management of GAD and comorbid MD by Venezuelan psychiatrists, as well as comparing the correlation with international recommendations.

**Methods:** This survey was conducted recently at a National Psychiatric meeting in Caracas. A 27-item questionnaire, developed to investigate the different treatment strategies, was completed by 100 psychiatrists during a presentation of clinical cases, with the model of key-pad.

**Results:** 80% prescribed selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs). 70% prescribed an SSRI plus benzodiazepines (BZD); in addition, 80% favoured a combined approach, pharmacotherapy and psychotherapy. Cognitive Behavioural Therapy was the psychological treatment most commonly used (60%).

**Conclusions:** The survey shows that the majority of participants prefer a combination of pharmacotherapy and psychotherapy as first-line treatment strategy. Reported practice in this sample for the pharmacological approach, appears consistent with recent evidence-based treatment guidelines. The main drawback of the study is the small number of participants.