
PSYCHOTIC DEPRESSION – CORRELATES OF EVENTUAL DIAGNOSES DURING FOLLOW-UP

J. Korkeila¹, H. Aliu²

¹Psychiatry, University of Turku, Turku, Finland ; ²Psychiatry, Satakunta Hospital District, Harjavalta, Finland

Background: Patients with psychotic depression have a high rate of relapses and readmissions. There have been conflicting findings regarding the stability of the psychotic depression diagnosis.

Methods: The study is based on a sample of patients (diagnosis codes: F32.3x, F33.3x, F25.xx, F29), who had their first treatment episode in the hospital district of Satakunta between the years of 1996 and 2000. Their patients' records were reviewed using an instrument to record background data, information on treatment episode and treatments, and symptoms. Additionally, data from national registers (hospital discharge register, reimbursement of medications and causes of death) was collected and followed until the end of 2008.

Results: The sample included 181 subjects, 70 men (38.7%) and 111 women (61.3%). Out of the whole sample, 17.1% (n=31) had a diagnosis of schizoaffective disorder, 23.8% (n=43) a diagnosis of psychosis NOS and 59.1 % (n=107) a diagnosis of psychotic depression. Patients with psychotic depression were significantly older (60.1) compared to schizoaffective (49.8) and psychosis NOS (36.5) patients ($p<0.001$). About two thirds of the patients (n=119) had at least two treatment episodes. A change in the diagnosis of the patient from the first episode to the last during the 12-year follow-up was observed in 34 (28.6%) out 119 subjects. Schizoaffective disorder (88.0%) was the most stable diagnosis, psychotic depression a moderately stable diagnosis (68.7%) among the readmitted patients. Only one case with psychosis NOS had retained the diagnosis.

Conclusions: In this sample, among the readmitted patients psychotic depression was a fairly stable diagnosis.