

P-499 - EXPERIENCES OF DEPRESSION: LEARNING FROM THAI PATIENTS

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Major depression is the fourth leading cause of global disease burden. This phenomenology study aims to explain the experiences of male and female patients with depressive disorder. The participants were patients diagnosed with major depressive disorder. A total of 42 participants including 21 male and 21 female patients were recruited from out-patient clinics. Data were collected by in-depth interviews and analyzed using thematic analysis method. Findings: Both female and male patients suffered from gender role internalization. They suffered from ruminative thoughts. Depressive symptoms do not present any concrete abnormality as other illnesses do; consequently it is difficult for others to understand their experiences. Female patients shared there were stigma from receiving treatment from psychiatric hospitals and therefore considered as a barrier to seek help from experts. Both male and female patients did not understand the illness, its course and treatment. In addition, many tended to adjust the medication doses by themselves. Female patients also indicated reasons for not complying with treatment; they included concern of gaining weight and the danger of being under medications for a long period of time. Some men would like to regain self-control so they stopped taking medication. The majority of patients received only medication treatment without psychosocial treatment. Both male and female patients shared that sex of therapist was not as significant as their characters. The findings suggest that new innovations that can enhance public awareness of depression are urgently needed in order to reduce stigma related to illness and enhance accessibility to treatment.