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Suicide Revisited: Significant Reduction of Suicide Rate over the Last Two Decades - a Replication Study of a Dutch Incidence Cohort with Recent Onset Psychosis.

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Introduction

Suicide remains the leading cause of premature death in patients with psychotic disorders. The lifetime suicide risk for schizophrenia is approximately 10%.

Objectives

This study aims to compare the suicide risk over the past decade following recent onset psychosis to findings from the eighties and nineties in the same catchment area and to identify predictors of suicide in the context of the Psychosis Recent Onset Groningen - Survey (PROGR-S).

Methods

A medical file search was carried out to determine the current status of all patients admitted between 2000 and 2009. The suicide rate was compared with a study executed in 1973-1988 in the same catchment area. Predictors of suicide were investigated using Cox regression.

Results

The status of 424 of the 614 patients was known in July 2014. Suicide occurred in 2.4% of the patients with psychotic disorders (n=10; mean follow-up 5.6 years); 6 out of 10 suicides took place within two years. Within two decades, the suicide rate dropped from 11% (follow-up 15 years, 8.5% after 5 years) to 2.4%. The Standardized Mortality Rate (SMR) of suicides compared with the general population was 41.6. A higher age was the only significant predictor for suicide. Neuroticism, living situation, disorganized and negative symptoms, and passive coping style showed a trend for significance. A significant reduction in the suicide rate was found for people with psychosis over the past decades.

Conclusions

A considerable drop in suicide rate was found. Given the high SMR, suicide research should have the highest priority.