

P01-329 - DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION OF AN ABORIGINAL MENTAL HEALTH SCREENING INSTRUMENT

A. Janca

School of Psychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences, University of Western Australia, Perth, WA, Australia

Objectives: To develop and evaluate a culturally appropriate instrument for screening of mental health problems in Aboriginal people.

Methods: A ten-item screening instrument has been developed in collaboration with indigenous and non-indigenous health and mental health professionals. Subsequently, the instrument was evaluated in urban and rural parts of Australia for its cultural applicability, reliability and validity. The evaluation process included collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data.

Results: A novel instrument entitled "Aboriginal Here and Now Assessment" is based on the Aboriginal holistic view of health and covers ten culturally relevant physical and mental health domains including: general wellbeing, physical health, anxiety, depression, suicide risk, substance use, psychotic experiences, functioning, contextual issues and resilience. The instrument uses a visual severity scale and contains a symptom summary which can be used for providing a feedback to the individual.

Conclusions: There is a paucity of culturally appropriate instruments for screening and assessment of Aboriginal mental health problems. The newly developed tool appears to be culturally applicable for screening of mental health problems in Australian Aboriginal people. The instrument is available for further evaluation across other indigenous populations around the world.