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PERCEPTION OF DISEASE AND PATHWAYS TO CARE IN BIPOLAR DISORDER

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Introduction: Bipolar disorder (BD) is a major psychiatric disorder that has important consequences for those who live with it. Day by day new contributions for diagnosis and treatment appear thanks to a continuous research advance. However there are many challenges to defeat such as the pathways to care that bipolar patients choose, and the different factors that have an impact on seeking for treatment.

Objective: To describe the role that perception of disease has on the selection of pathways to care in patients with BD.

Aims: To generate information to augment the available data for specific interventions in bipolar patients.

Methods: We studied perception of disease in six patients with BD through focused interviews. The results were analyzed from a qualitative approach.

Results: We found that even when the main type of health care practices reported by these patients had to do with the allopathic form, usually they combine and try different health care forms. This allows each patient to build their own pathway to care in order to meet their needs and their suffering from living with BD.

Conclusions: Pathways to care in BD are composed of a combination of health care practices, this situation happens because the patient needs to look for the possibility to get a stock of potential alternatives of treatment which allow to maximize his/her curative resources. Beside this, having a variety of treatment modalities helps bipolar people to deal with the different issues that are part of the experience of living with BD.