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CHARACTERISTICS OF PATIENTS WITH SCHIZOPHRENIA AND GOOD MEDICATION ADHERENCE TREATED IN EVERYDAY CLINICAL PRACTICE ACROSS FOUR EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

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Aim: Little is known about patients with schizophrenia treated in everyday clinical practice who have good medication adherence. The survey performed in four European countries (Germany, Greece, Italy and Spain) aimed to characterize these patients in terms of demographic characteristics, presenting symptomatology, and current antipsychotic treatment.

Methods: A survey involving 744 psychiatrists gathered anonymous retrospective data from 3,996 patients with schizophrenia. Principal component analysis was used to structure the patient attributes relevant for antipsychotic choice, identifying two discriminating variables (disease severity and socioeconomic level) accounting for 91% of the variance in the data. Methodology is described in full detail by Gorwood (2010).

Results: 35% of 3,996 patients were assessed as having good medication adherence. They had a mean 5.0 previous episodes and 3.2 previous hospitalizations, 67% were assessed as having mild to moderately severe illness, and 42% as having mild cognitive dysfunction, and 76% had high or satisfactory insight on the disease. 62% of them were outpatients, 18% were living alone and 72% with the family, with a relative being principal caregiver in 58% of subjects. 48% were smokers, 6% had drug and 6% alcohol addiction. Risperidone and quetiapine were used most frequently (each in 20% of subjects). Ziprasidone was used in 10% of patients.

Conclusion: Approximately 2/3 of the patients with good medication adherence were living with a family. 40% of subjects had mild cognitive dysfunction. Rates of smoking and drug/alcohol addiction were substantially lower than in other patient subpopulations investigated in this survey.