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## The Relationship Between Patients' Needs and Psychopathology in Schizophrenia: Do Patients and Therapists Agree?

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### Introduction

Meeting patients' needs is of great importance for ensuring quality of life and reducing social disability in severe mental disorders, such as schizophrenia. However, the degree of agreement between patients and their therapists in the assessment of needs warrants further investigation, regarding that high patient-therapist agreement is associated with improved outcomes.

### Objectives

Current symptomatology might differentially affect the self-report and clinician-rated appraisal of schizophrenia patients' needs.

### Aims

To examine the potential impact of current symptoms on patients' and therapists' assessment of patients' needs.

### Methods

Fifty-three schizophrenia patient–staff pairs were interviewed using the Greek research version of the Camberwell Assessment of Need (CAN-R). Patients' symptom severity was assessed with the Positive and Negative Syndrome Scale (PANSS).

### Results

The degree of agreement between staff and patients in the assessment of needs was high. Significant correlations were found between the total number of needs and all the dimensions of PANSS (positive, negative, general psychopathology) in the staff group but not in the patient group. In both groups, the total number of unmet needs was significantly correlated with the general psychopathology and the total PANSS scores.

### Conclusions

The constancy of the therapeutic context might contribute to a high rate of agreement between patients and staff about needs of the latter. The severity of symptoms may influence clinicians' assessment of schizophrenia patients' needs. Nevertheless, according to both patients' and therapists' assessments symptom severity is associated with greater number of unmet needs.

**Keywords:** Needs, Schizophrenia, Psychopathology, Quality of Life, Social disability