

Article: 1131

Topic: EPV03 - e-Poster 03: Bipolar Disorders

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## Bad On the Net, or Bipolars' Lives On the Web: Analyzing Discussion Web Pages for Individuals with Bipolar Affective Disorder

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**Objective:** The main therapeutic approach in the treatment of bipolar affective disorder is the administration of drugs. The effectiveness of this approach can be increased by specific psychotherapeutic interventions. There is not much knowledge about self-help initiatives in this field. Anonymous internet communication may be beneficial, regardless of the fact that it is non-professional. It offers a chance to confide and share symptoms with other patients, to open up for persons with feelings of shame, and to obtain relevant information without having a direct contact with an expert. **Methods:** Quantitative analysis of web discussions used by patients with bipolar disorder in Czech language was performed. Using key words 'diskuze' (discussion), 'maniodeprese' (manic depression) and 'bipolární porucha' (bipolar disorder), 8 discussions were found, but only 3 of them were anonymous and non-professional. Individual discussion entries were analyzed for basic categories or subcategories, and these were subsequently assessed so that their relationships could be better understood. **Results:** A total of 436 entries from 3 discussion web pages were analyzed. Subsequently, six categories were identified (participant, diagnosis, relationships, communication, topic and treatment). These were analyzed in terms of relationships and patterns. **Conclusions:** Czech discussion webpages for people suffering from bipolar disorder are a lively community of users supporting each other, that may be characterized as a compact body open to newcomers. They seem to fulfill patients' needs that are not fully met by health care services. It also has a 'self-cleaning' ability, effectively dealing with posts that are inappropriate, provocative, criticizing, aggressive or meaningless.