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USE OF ANTIPSYCHOTICS IN PATIENTS WITH BEHAVIOURAL AND PSYCHIATRIC SYMPTOMS OF DEMENTIA - A RETROSPECTIVE STUDY

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Aims and objectives: To review current practice of Antipsychotics prescribing in patients with Behavioural and Psychiatric symptoms of Dementia in secondary care hospital.

Methodology: This was a retrospective audit targeting all patients who were diagnosed with a dementing illness in a large secondary care hospital from September 2008 to December 2008 inclusive. Data was collected from patients' health care records and central computer database. Current practice was then compared with the standards proposed by the NICE Guidelines (National Institute of Clinical Excellence, 2006)

Results: Out of 18 patients who were diagnosed with dementia, 66% (n=12) were prescribed antipsychotics. Out of these, 66% (n=8) were males and 34% (n=4) were females.

75% (n=9) had explicitly documented indications for antipsychotics use in their health care records with only 25% cases (n=3) alternative treatment options such as psychosocial interventions were considered.

Discussions with patients and/or the carers' were documented in 50% (n=6) cases. Periodic reviews were carried out in 66% (n=8) cases.

Conclusion: Antipsychotics are commonly used in behavioural and psychiatric symptoms of dementia. Considering higher risk of morbidity and mortality with antipsychotics use in this population group, it is of paramount importance that reasons for prescribing and discussion with patients and/or their carers should be clearly documented. If antipsychotics are prescribed patients should be reviewed on regular basis.