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Topic: S45 - Symposium 07: The influence of socio-cultural factors on mental health of immigrants

Therapeutic Interventions for Immigrants with a Mental Illness

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With increasing globalisation, the migration of people is being affected by migration of resources as well. Individuals have multiple cultural identities and will need careful assessments. Cultures play a significant role in the way in which mental illnesses of all kind present. These are strongly influenced by the type of cultures individuals come from and settle down. Acculturation affects the mode of presentation. Potential impact of culture on therapeutic alliance - whether in drug management or in psychotherapy will be described in relation to managing migrant patients who have specific needs. Cultures determine and affect patterns of child-rearing as well as cognitive development of individuals and their world view. When ill, culture determines how individuals and their families explain what has gone wrong and how emotional distress is expressed. It is critical that clinicians are aware of the role culture plays not only in defining these experiences and clinicians should take this into account in the process of developing therapeutic interventions and strategies which will be culturally acceptable and accessible. Cultural factors also play a major role in therapeutic engagement and alliance, in psychopharmacological interventions as well as in delivery of specific psychotherapies. It is likely that prevalence of various psychotic disorders will vary, as will pathways into care and patterns of help-seeking.