

miniscule. From these studies, it appears that typical antipsychotics are effective in youngsters with psychotic illness. However, the incidence of certain side effects, particularly EPS, is found to be higher in young patients compared with adults. PET receptor studies have demonstrated that incidence of EPS is related to dose-dependent D2 receptor occupancy, and there is a significant relationship between the number of these receptors and age. Children appear to be more susceptible to side effect (EPS), and because of its prospective longer use, it places them at a high risk of tardive dyskinesia. The atypical antipsychotic risperidone appears to represent a better alternative than conventional neuroleptics, with a lower risk of extrapyramidal side effects.

Methods: In open-label study the 14 subjects (8 boys and 6 girls) aged from 7 to 17 years (mean age 14.6 years), with schizophrenic disorders received risperidone. The duration of treatment varied from 5 up to 8 weeks, with mean duration being 6.7 weeks. These assessment criteria were used: Positive and Negative Subscales of the PANSS and Clinical Global Impressions (CGI). Parameters were analysed using t-test.

Results: Positive and negative symptoms improved during the course of trial, mean PANSS total score improved significantly on week 3. The safety profile of risperidone in children was similar to that in adult patients and none of adverse events were considered serious.

Conclusions: In subjects with early onset of schizophrenia, risperidone has demonstrated safe and effectiveness against both negative and positive symptoms according to PANSS, with improvement in CGI.

P02.300

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN PSYCHIATRIC ADMISSIONS: THE INFLUENCE OF CULTURE AND SOCIAL PSYCHIATRY
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Retrospective analysis of all psychiatric admissions in Al-Ain District over 5 years (n = 2745) showed a consistent excess of male over female inpatients by a ratio of 1.49: 1. To explore this phenomenon, all admissions during a period of three months were retrospectively assessed using a modified form of the Bethlem Royal and Maudsley Hospital Observation Sheet. In addition to socio-demographic characteristics, personal history, medical and psychiatric history, symptom profile and investigations, the assessment also covered treatment outcome as assessed by the Clinical Global Impression Scale. A number of gender differences emerged. Past psychiatric history revealed that male patients had more often sought contact with psychiatric services and had more frequent previous admissions when compared to their female counterparts. Apart from birth order, no differences were found in the circumstances of upbringing, or that of development. Male patients with a psychotic disorder more often exhibited delusions of persecution, and received a diagnosis of schizophrenia. Patients admitted for alcohol and drug problems were exclusively males. On the other hand, increasing number of female patients presented with affective and conversion disorder. Female patients were more often considered more to be markedly improved on discharge than their male counterparts, perhaps due to the different diagnostic profile. One way of explaining these findings would be to regard this as resulting from the influence of gender characteristics in the manifestation of psychopathology but the authors feel that this could more readily be explained by the idiosyncratic social fabric of the United Arab Emirates.

P02.301

LIFE QUALITY IN A GROUP OF ELDERLY PEOPLE WHO ARE NON SELF-SUFFICIENT, AND NON INSTITUTIONALIZED

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Objectives: To describe the health and life conditions of a group of elderly people who are not self-sufficient and live at home, and not in nursing institutions.

Design: Population based, cross-sectional health survey.

Participants: 167 persons (60 males and 107 females), interviewed from January to 30 July 1996.

Inclusion criteria: Minimum age of 65; non-self-sufficiency; living in urban areas of Turin, but not in institutions.

Measurements: It has been administered an obliged-choice questionnaire about life and health conditions, ADL index for disability level and the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale.

Results: By observing elderly patients, it has been found that the quality of life of the non-self sufficient is negatively influenced above all by the degree of disability and depression, and apparently is less influenced by the degree of anxiety. The non-self-sufficiency condition does not always correspond to physical disability. Depression in non-self-sufficient, non-institutionalised elderly people, seems to worsen attitudes towards life more than what physical disability does.

Conclusion: Some types of non-self-sufficiency seem to be caused by cultural prejudice. Some elderly are actually less seriously disabled, from a medical point of view, than they, their family and the privileged sources of information think. Psychopathological factors family dynamics probably worsen the non-self-sufficient condition of a person. Therefore, the therapeutic strategy, also from the point of view of Quality of Life, should consider more articulate geriatric and psychosocial interventions.

P02.302

BULIMIC FAMILY DYNAMICS: TEMPERAMENT AND CHARACTER DYNAMICS

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Objective: Modern psychobiological research conceptualizes personality as a complex adaptive system involving a bi-directional interaction between heritable neurobiological dispositions (temperament) and social learning (character). In this study, we evaluate temperament and character traits of parents with bulimia nervosa, their mothers and fathers, and we analyze correlations of temperament and character traits among family members in bulimic families. Finally, we test the ability of the TCI to discriminate between normal controls and bulimic subjects, their parents and their family.

Subjects: Temperament and Character features of 65 bulimic patients and their parents (24 mothers and 19 fathers) were analyzed and then compared with a control group of 60 women and their 20 fathers and 20 mothers using the TCI.

Results: This study demonstrates that both temperament and character factor are involved in Bulimia Nervosa (BN). Consistent with earlier results bulimic individuals were high in Harm Avoidance and Novelty Seeking. As a novel finding, their character was