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EFFECT OF PREGABALIN ON GENERALIZED ANXIETY DISORDER PATIENTS WITH SEVERE SYMPTOMS OF ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION REFRACTORY TO DULOXETIN

J.M. Olivares¹, J.L. Carrasco², E. Alvarez³, M. Pérez⁴, V. López-Gómez⁴, I. Vilaradaga⁵, J. Rejas⁶

¹Department of Psychiatry, Hospital Meixoeiro, Complejo Hospitalario Universitario, Vigo,

²Department of Psychiatry, Hospital Clínico San Carlos, Madrid, ³Department of Psychiatry, Hospital de la Santa Creu i San Pau, Barcelona, ⁴Department of Neuroscience, Medical

Unit, Pfizer Spain, Alcobendas (Madrid), ⁵Department of Biometric and Statistic, European

Biometric Institute, Barcelona, ⁶Health Outcomes Research Department, Medical Unit, Pfizer Spain, Alcobendas (Madrid), Spain

Purpose: The purpose of this research was to analyse the effect of adding Pregabalin (PGB) on severe symptoms of anxiety and depression in patients with Generalized Anxiety Disorder refractory to duloxetine in daily medical practice in Spain.

Methods: This is a post-hoc analysis of a 6-month multicentre, prospective and observational study carried out in outpatient psychiatric clinics in Spain. Men and women, above 18 years, with a diagnosis of GAD according with DSM-IV-TR criteria, pregabalin naïve and refractory to a previous course of duloxetine (3 months or more) and severe symptoms of anxiety (HAM-A \geq 24) and depression (MADRS \geq 35) were considered eligible for analysis.

Results: A total of twenty-five patients [76% women, mean age; 49.3 (11.8) years, 82% with a comorbid depressive disorder] fulfilled criteria for analysis, and were previously exposed to duloxetine [mean dose: 71.7 (26.7) mg/day] for an average of 6.7 (3.7) months. Adding pregabalin [mean dose: 172.8 (75.5) mg/day], during 5.2 (1.8) months, reduced both anxiety and depressive symptoms by a mean of, respectively in HAM-A and MADRS scales, 54.1% (from 36.5 \pm 4.3 pts to 16.6 \pm 9.1 pts; $p < 0.001$, effect size: 4.63) and 52.8% (from 40.4 \pm 4.6 pts to 19.0 \pm 11.0 pts; $p < 0.001$, effect size: 4.65). As a result, the percentages of patients without symptoms of either anxiety or depression were 30% and 24%, respectively.

Conclusion: Despite small sample, adding pregabalin had a meaningful and significant effect on severe symptoms of anxiety and depressive symptoms in patients with severe GAD and concomitant depressive disorder resistant to duloxetine.