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DISABILITY IN SCHIZOPHRENIC DISORDERS

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Aims: The purpose of this study was to investigate disability among patients suffering from schizophrenia and to identify predictors of disability.

Methods: 101 patients from different types of psychiatric services in Vienna and diagnosed with schizophrenia according to ICD-10 were included. They were investigated by means of 36-Item self-administered version of the WHO Disability Assessment Schedule II (WHO-DAS-II) and the PANSS-scale. Patients' mothers and fathers were asked to fill in the Family Problem Questionnaire.

Results: The mean total score of the WHO-DAS-II was 74.1 (SD 21.9). When using weighted sub-scores the highest disability scores were found for social contacts, participation in society and household (means 2.58, 2.57 and 2.51 respectively). Using logistic regression, overall disability was positively associated with patient's age, overall severity of symptoms (PANSS) and number of previous hospital admissions. Overall disability was not associated with duration of illness and or patient's gender. The subjective burden experienced by patients' fathers and mothers were increased by reduced social contacts and impaired participation in society, while we could not find an association with other domains of patient's disability (understanding, mobility, self-care, household).

Conclusions: This study shows that schizophrenia results in disability in several domains. Family caregivers' burden was predominantly increased by social consequences of schizophrenia.