
IMPACT OF PATIENT SUICIDE IN THE THERAPIST - DATA FROM A PORTUGUESE SAMPLE

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One third of all patients that committed suicide attended Mental Health Services in the year that preceded their suicide (1/5 in the previous month) and 50-70% of all specialists and 40-50% of Psychiatry residents experience at least one case during their clinical practice. In fact, 97% of all therapists assume a patient's suicide as their strongest fear. All available studies describe a patient's suicide as an emotional, often traumatic, experience for the therapist. Our study aimed to assess and describe the impact of a patient suicide in their therapist in a sample of Portuguese psychiatrists, both specialists and residents, focusing in their emotional responses. An anonymous questionnaire was emailed to all psychiatrists working in the Centre of Portugal (area of Coimbra). Included questions regarding socio-demographic information of the therapist, years of practice, sociodemographic data regarding the patient and context of suicidal behaviour, and ten different emotional responses assessing both its intensity and duration. Deadline for accepting replies is 30th November 2013. We hope to finish analysing all data by the end of January 2013 and be ready to present by February 2013.