

AS16-01 - SOCIAL DEPRIVATION AND THE EARLY COURSE OF SCHIZOPHRENIA

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Social deprivation has been consistently found as a risk factor for the incidence of psychosis. This study aimed at investigating the effect of social deprivation on short-term outcome of patients with a recent onset of schizophrenia (< 2 years).

A social deprivation score was calculated taking into account a low/very low socio-economic status, unemployment, low school education, and living alone. Psychiatric symptoms were assessed by BPRS. Compulsory and voluntary hospitalizations, engagement with mental health services, and suicidal attempts were also considered as outcome measures.

The sample consists of 35 patients, who had a first episode of psychosis at 19.7 (\pm 4.7) years. In the first two years of the illness, 28% of patients committed suicide attempts and 37% were hospitalized. Twenty-six per cent of the patients had high levels of social deprivation.

Patients with higher levels of social deprivation had a more acute clinical onset and a worse short-term outcome, characterized by more severe positive symptoms, an higher number of voluntary and compulsory hospitalizations, and a reduced engagement with outpatient mental health facilities. No significant differences were found as regards suicidal attempts.

These results highlight that social deprivation has a negative impact on short-term outcome of schizophrenia and on patients' engagement with mental health services and on, and suggest the need of targeting interventions on the basis of patients' clinical and social needs.