SOME COGNITIVE FEATURES AND PERCEIVED SOCIAL SUPPORT IN PERSONS TREATED FOR ALCOHOLIC LIVER DISEASE

M. Zorko[1], S. Roškar[1], V. Bucik[2], H. Jeriček Klanšček[1], Z. Čebašek Travnik[3], B. Kocijančič[4], B. Štabuc[4]

[1]Centre for Health Promotion, Institute of Public Health, [2]University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts, [3]University Psychiatric Hospital Ljubljana, [4]Gastroenterology Departement, University Medical Centre, Ljubljana, Slovenia

Research highlights the importance of cognitive functions and availability of social support in the development of alcohol dependence syndrome. Cognitive deficits, specific features of perceived social support and high prevalence of depression were found in alcohol-dependent persons treated for alcohol dependence by psychiatrists. On the other hand, the population of people treated for alcoholic liver disease (ALD) in gastroenterology departments has seldom been investigated. The aim of our study was to investigate the prevalence of depression, problem-solving and perceived social support in persons with ALD (N = 42) as compared to those with non-alcoholic liver disease (N = 9) and hospital controls (N = 31). AUDIT-10, Beck Depression Inventory, WCST, Means-ends problem solving test and Perceived social support questionnaire were used. We did not confirm the hypothesis that persons with ALD would show more signs and symptoms of depression as compared to the other two groups. Persons with alcoholic and non-alcoholic liver disease showed decreased cognitive flexibility and deficits in problem solving compared to hospital controls, further on persons with ALD showed deficits in interpersonal problem solving, which were evident in the phase of generating alternative solutions to the problem. Persons with ALD had smaller social network, while no differences between the groups were found regarding satisfaction with support and other examined social network characteristics. Psychosocial interventions aimed at persons treated for ALD in gastroenterology departments should focus on teaching effective problem-solving techniques, strengthening supportive network ties and encouraging people to use alternative sources of support.