
LONG-ACTING SECOND-GENERATION ANTIPSYCHOTICS: IMPROVING SUBJECTIVE EXPERIENCE OF PHARMACOLOGICAL TREATMENT AND QUALITY OF LIFE

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Introduction: Long-acting injectable (LAI) antipsychotics have been used as an alternative to oral antipsychotic formulations.

Aims: to evaluate the impact of switching to a LAI second-generation antipsychotic (SGA) in terms of changes in patient's psychopathology, subjective experience of drug and quality of life.

Methods: 18 adult outpatients diagnosed with Schizoaffective disorder (by means of the SCID-I/P) and attending the Psychiatric Unit of the University of Florence were recruited. All patients were under a stabilized therapy with a single oral SGA (either olanzapine or paliperidone) and were switched to its corresponding LAI formulation (olanzapine pamoate or paliperidone palmitate). Patients were assessed by means of the following questionnaires: MADRS, YMRS, PANSS, DAI-10, SWN and SF-36 at enrolment (T0) and after 6 months (T1).

Results: A significant reduction was found between T0 and T1 ($p < .05$) in PANSS total, negative and general psychopathology mean scores, as well as in mean MADRS and YMRS total scores. No difference was found for positive PANSS mean scores. We observed a significant increase of mean DAI-10 and SWN total scores between T0 and T1 ($p < .05$). A reduction of side effects like sedation and blunted affect between T0 and T1 ($p < .05$) was confirmed by significant increases in mean SF-36 subscales scores, such as: general health ($p < .01$) change in health ($p < .01$) and social integration ($p < .05$).

Conclusions: Treatment with LAI SGAs seems to be a valid alternative in patients with Schizoaffective disorder. Our preliminary data suggest an improvement in patient's subjective experience of pharmacological therapy and health-related quality of life, together with a similar efficacy on psychopathology.