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TOBACCO SMOKING AND MOTIVATION TO QUIT IN PSYCHIATRIC PATIENTS

I. Ganhão, E. Gonçalves, A. Paixão, M. Trigo

Centro Hospitalar Psiquiátrico de Lisboa, Lisbon, Portugal

Introduction: Smoking is a major health risk in the population in general with significantly increased morbidity/mortality with severe consequences on the quality of life and tremendous economic burden on society. It is well known that psychiatric patients have an even higher prevalence of smoking, of heavy smokers and of other risk factors that contribute to the same illnesses.

Non-smoking campaigns/smoking restrictions have flourished and it appears that more people are quitting or seriously contemplating the idea. When once, many non-smokers tolerated smokers, today the stigma associated with smoking is undeniable. Psychiatric patients, already greatly stigmatized, risk even becoming more so. Furthermore, smoking cessation programs and interventions frequently are not available, exclude many psychiatric patients and/or are ill-adapted to the special needs in this patient population.

Aim: To establish the prevalence of smoking, quantity of tobacco smoked, other factors of dependence by psychiatric diagnosis in a portuguese psychiatric hospital.

Establish the motivation of these patients to seek help by professionals and motivation to quit.

Methods: Application of questionnaires including Fagerstrom's Modified Questionnaire to patients under care by one team of a Psychaitric hospital in Lisbon, Portugal (CHPL - Sector A).

Discussion and conclusions: The study is under way therefore, there are no valid conclusions yet.

Certainly it will be possible to confirm high levels of smoking tobacco in this patient population. Hopefully, we may also conclude that there is the desire to change smoking habits making cessation programs a needed and welcomed intervention in psychiatric settings.