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IMPACT OF PSYCHOEDUCATION ON PROFESSIONAL STRESS REDUCTION WITHIN PRISON GUARDS

A. Bravo-Mehmedbasic^{1,2}, D. Salčić^{1,2}, A. Kučukalić^{1,2}, S. Fadilpaić^{1,2}, L. Čaković¹, E. Mehmedika-Suljić³

¹Association Center for Torture Survivors, ²Department of Psychiatry, ³Department of Neurology, University Medical Center, Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Aim: Evaluation of psychoeducation effects on professional stress consequences within prison guards.

Method: In the research were included 122 prison guards from three prisons in Bosnia and Herzegovina. All of them have been tested before and after psychoeducation was finished using following instruments: Index of reaction, STAI questionnaire, SAMAČA questionnaire.

Results: Differences between first and second measuring of subjects included in this study in Sarajevo prison indicated statistically significant reduction of stress reactions, improvement of coping strategies and communication skills. In prisons in Zenica and Kula there are differences between first and second measurement in stress reactions reduction, improvement of coping strategies and overcoming of stress and improvement of communication skills as well, which are not statistically significant. In Kula Prison, significant differences between two measurements in attitudes of prison guards toward detainees were observed.

Conclusions: Results of this study show that prison guards within prisons where are detained persons with long period of imprisonment (Zenica, Kula) are more exposed to professional stress, comparing to prison guards who are employed in investigation prison (Sarajevo). Psychoeducation resulted in positive effects and it should be obligatory included in prison guards training with the aim of decreasing of psychological consequences of prolonged professional stress to which they are exposed to. Psychoeducation should be on continuous basis and led by educated mental health professionals.