

Diagnostic stability and clinical characteristics in first-episode psychosis

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Introduction

Diagnostic stability in first-episode psychosis shows a wide variability between studies. Amini and cols reported a 50% rate of patients diagnosed of schizophreniform disorder shifting to schizophrenia during the first 12 months period (Amini et al, 2005). Other

diagnoses such as brief psychotic disorders have a wider variety of stability rates (Chaves et al, 2006; Schimmelmann et al, 2005; Schwartz et al, 2000). Here we report the preliminary follow-up results of our recently ongoing first-episode psychosis unit.

Methods

Fifty patients admitted for a first-episode of psychosis to our Inpatient Psychiatric Unit from January 2006 to December 2008. Clinical and socio-demographic characteristics were registered during admission period and during the follow-up period. Patients were evaluated during the admission period using SCID-I D (DSM IV clinical criteria). Diagnostic criteria were reviewed every 6 months.

Results

Table 1 shows diagnostics at discharge, at 6 months and at 12 months follow-up period of patients admitted to our hospital for a first psychotic episode. Sixteen percent of the subjects were drop-outs during the follow-up period. The 22% and 46% of the initial subjects hadn't yet completed the 6 months and the 12 months follow-up period respectively. These subjects were excluded from the analysis at the corresponding time.

Patients shifting to schizophrenia at 6 months after admission were predominantly male (77.8% vs 63.6%, Not significant differences), presented a higher proportion of unemployment (55.6% vs 31.8%, $p = 0.041$) at admission, and a lower proportion reaching university studies (0% vs 4.5%, $p = 0.021$). From the clinical point of view there were no significant differences in scores of PANSS or Hamilton Anxiety scale at admission or at discharge time. However, when considering the 12 months follow-up period, patients shifting to schizophrenia presented higher scores in PANSS positive and negative subscales measured at 6 months.

Table 1: Diagnostic stability at discharge, 6 months and 12 months follow-up period.

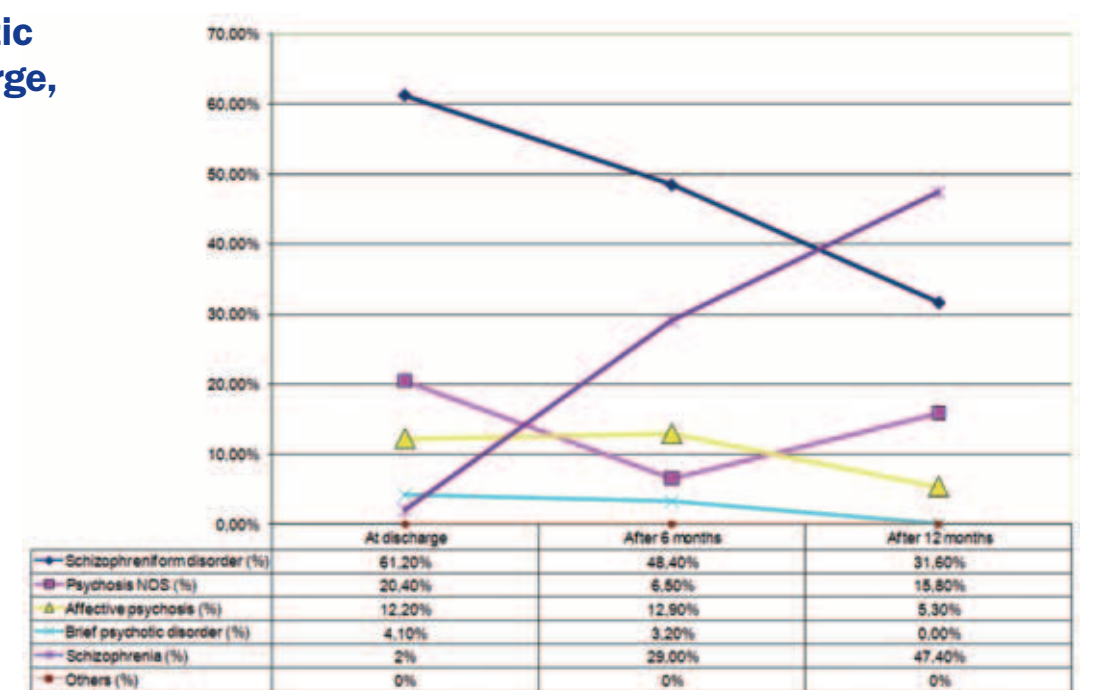


Table 2: Clinical and socio-demographic differences of patients evolving and not evolving to schizophrenia at 6 and 12 months follow-up period.

	6 months follow-up period			12 months follow-up period		
	Schizophrenia	Non schizophrenia	p	Schizophrenia	Non schizophrenia	p
Age, mean years (SD)	25,5 (5,8)	24,8 (4,0)	0,669	25,6 (5,0)	25,2 (4,5)	0,873
PANSS-P at admission, mean (SD)	24,1 (6,9)	28,5 (7,1)	0,129	25,3 (7,8)	31,1 (6,5)	0,096
PANSS-P at discharge, mean (SD)	12,0 (2,8)	11,5 (3,9)	0,731	12,2 (2,3)	10,6 (3,2)	0,225
PANSS-P at 6 months, mean (SD)				11,1 (2,11)	8,3 (2,2)	0,03*
PANSS-N at admission, mean (SD)	17,0 (6,6)	15,7 (6,2)	0,615	18,0 (6,1)	31,1 (6,5)	0,051
PANSS-N at discharge, mean (SD)	17,8 (5,2)	14,6 (4,3)	0,106	17,3 (5,1)	13,9 (4,6)	0,142
PANSS-N at 6 months, mean (SD)				20,7 (6,3)	11,6 (2,1)	0,003*
Admission period, mean days (SD)	14,3 (8,3)	15,5 (10,6)	0,794	15,5 (12,6)	12,9 (4,4)	0,56
Hamilton Anxiety at admission, mean (SD)	19,0 (3,6)	27,37 (6,3)	0,061	24,0 (5,3)	24,0 (2,0)	0,99
Sex (% male)	77,80%	63,60%	0,445	77,80%	50,00%	0,21
University studies	0,00%	4,50%	0,021*	0,00%	10,00%	0,021*
Unemployed at admission	55,60%	31,80%	0,041*	55,60%	20,00%	0,581

* $p < 0.05$

Conclusions

Schizophrenia spectrum disorders have a high stability in first-episode psychosis during first year follow-up. Almost half of the subjects admitted for a first psychotic episode reach schizophrenia diagnostic criteria after one year. As in previous studies, male gender is one of the factors related to the shift to. No clinical characteristics at the beginning of the illness seem to predict an evolution to schizophrenia.

Bibliography

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