

Schizophrenia and violence at home

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Introduction

There is good evidence from epidemiological studies that the diagnosis of schizophrenia is associated with an increased risk of violence. Some studies have linked the presence of positive symptoms, first psychotic episode, duration of untreated psychosis and lack of insight with violent behavior.

Objective

The primary objective was to identify factors related to violent behavior in patients diagnosed with psychotic disorder attended by our group, a multidisciplinary mobile outreach team (EMSE).

Methodology

We evaluated a total of 249 patients diagnosed with psychotic disorder between 2007 and 2012. We administered the following scales: PANSS (Positive and Negative Syndrome Scale) GAF (Global Assessment of Functioning), CGI (Clinical Global Impression), GEP (Severity of psychiatric illness scale, AVAT (Instrument to assess violent behavior in mental illness) and SUMD (Scale unawareness of mental disorders). To study the correlation between the scales and the score of the AVAT instrument we used the Pearson correlation. Clinical variables were also compared between aggressive and non-aggressive patients using Chi-square and Student's t.

Results

There is a positive correlation between AVAT and PANSS-P ($r = 0.544$), ICG ($r = 0.472$), GEP ($r = 0.515$) and a negative correlation between AVAT and GAF ($r = -0.357$). The correlation between AVAT and SUMD is positive ($r = 0.119$) but not statistically significant.

Table 1. Clinical differences between aggressive and nonaggressive patients

Variables	Aggressiveness		P value
	No	Yes	p
Age (years)	39,5	30,3	<,001
Gender (male) (%)	50,9	60,8	0,149
Drugs abuse (%)	22,4	21,5	0,883
First psychotic episode (%)	12,7	17,7	0,298
Psychiatric history (%)	78	69,7	0,17
Adherence to treatment (%)	16,4	10,9	0,34
Previous psychiatric hospitalization (%)	57,6	53	0,532
Psychiatric hospitalization (%)	51,5	87,2	<,001
Police presence (%)	23,8	58,7	<,001
CGI Scale	2,5	3	<,05
GEP Scale (illness severity)	13,6	16,9	<,001

Conclusion

The presence of positive symptoms and clinical severity has been linked to increased aggressiveness and to predict the occurrence of violent behavior in the course of psychotic disorder. Unlike other studies, no correlation was observed with the lack of insight.

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