

certain degree for the duration of alcohol abuse. Assessments were done by means of a variety of neuropsychological tests involving domains such as: planning and attention, visual perception, visuoconstructive capacity, intelligence and memory. Magnetic Resonance Imaging was performed with a Gyroscan ACS-II and involved volumetric assessment of the hippocampus, the amygdala, de mammillarian corpus, thalamus, third ventricle and prefrontal cortex.

Patient inclusion and exclusion criteria, methodological procedures and the main results will be presented.

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SULPIRIDE IN THE TREATMENT OF PAIN DISORDER

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Background: Pain disorder (DSM IV) appears to be relatively common in general practice and to cause both psychological and functional impairment.

Aim: Assessing efficacy and safety of sulpiride in the treatment of pain disorder, under naturalistic conditions of use, in general practice.

Method: In a multicenter, open clinical trial, 669 patients (mean age: 47 years 12/female: 63%) fulfilling the DSM IV criteria for pain disorder (digestive localisation), were included by 321 General Physicians and treated for six weeks with sulpiride 150 mg/d. The pain was of psychological type in 93% of cases and caused social or working disabilities in 78% of patients.

Results: The investigator's scales showed from DO to DEnd a decrease in pain intensity (91% of patients) and in pain frequency (89%). Besides, at D42, 89% of patients were responders (much improved and very much improved) on the Clinical Global Improvement scale (CGI) item 2. A similar improvement ($p < 10^{-3}$) was observed from DO to DEnd on the self evaluation parameters (Visual Analogic Scales), assessing pain ($\Delta: 17.1 \pm 15.9$), quality of sleep ($\Delta: 27.1 \pm 17.8$), activity ($\Delta: 24.4 \pm 18.8$), and appetite ($\Delta: 22.6 \pm 16.6$). 8% of the patients had at least one adverse event. 3% of patients withdrawn for adverse events. The safety assessed with a specific variable (grouping together adverse events reporting and results of CGI item 3) was estimated "good" for 88% of patients.

Conclusions: These results confirm the usefulness of sulpiride in the treatment of pain disorder which is known as an symptomatology causing difficulties to GP's in their practice.

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REVIEW OF QUALITY OF LIFE STUDIES IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC¹

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The communication reviews a relatively new topic in Czech Social Psychiatry - the quality of life (QoL) studies.

In the Czech Republic (CZ) the endeavour to measure QoL follows the same peripeties as in countries with a longer QoL history. At present the QoL research goes through the phases of its content delimitation, of development of Czech QoL versions of instruments, of their validization and transcultural comparison to follow-up studies of diagnostically homogenous samples with special attention paid to the QoL of family members of the mentally and physically ill individuals (especially in chronic course of the disease),.

Besides the lists of QoL studies, instruments, main research aims and results, the psychometric characteristics of the Czech version of the SQUALA (Subjective QUALITY of Life Analysis; © NICE 1992, M. Zannotti) instrument are demonstrated derived from about 800 psychiatric cases and 400 control subjects. The profiles of subgroups by age, gender, and diagnostic classes are presented.

The instrument used allows to evaluate not only the QoL scores of various life domains, but also their value orientation and the individual's satisfaction with their state. It was applied in longitudinal studies of course and outcome of mental disorders, of the effectivity of rehabilitation and in comparison of the effectiveness of various health and social care provision alternatives

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HEALTH-RELATED QUALITY OF LIFE IN PSYCHIATRIC AND OTHER PATIENTS BEFORE AND AFTER TREATMENT

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Purpose: To compare the health-related quality of life (HQOL) of psychiatric out-patients with that of other patients as well as the effect of treatment on HQOL.

Method: A 32 item questionnaire compiled by the authors for assessing various aspects of HQOL which has an acceptable reliability and validity was filled in by several groups of patients coming to the hospital before or early in the treatment and at least three months later. These included psychiatric out-patients, alcoholics in day-treatment, orthopedic, urology and coronary artery patients.

Results: The psychiatric patients had a low HQOL in most respects which improved slightly after three months. The orthopedic patients had a slightly better overall HQOL, but lower as regards general health, energy, pain, and sleep, all of which improved considerably following treatment. The coronary artery patients HQOL was better than the others, but similar before and after treatment.

Conclusion: HQOL is an important aspect of health which needs more attention in treatment and in allocation of resources. However, we still lack data on HQOL in the general population for comparison.

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LITHIUM EVOKED DNA STRAND BREAKS AND APOPTOSIS IN IMR-32 CELLS ARE INDEPENDENT OF P53 AND INOS

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Introduction: We observed that lithium exerts a weak antiproliferative effect towards cells of the well-reported human neuroblastoma line IMR-32 accompanied with DNA fragmentation frequently leading to programmed cell death termed apoptosis. The line contains two cell types.

Objective: In search for intracellular regulators mediating the genotoxic and apoptotic effect of lithium in IMR-32 cells we tested the p53 tumor suppressor protein expression as well as that of the inducible nitric oxide synthase (iNOS).

Methods: Apoptosis was determined by detection of DNA strand breaks in the in situ nick translation (1) and by morphological