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DIFFERENCES IN CLINICAL AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT BETWEEN INMATES WITH HIGH VERSUS LOW RISK OF SUICIDE

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Introduction: Drugs addiction, suicide and mental health disorders are the major problems of inmates health. In Portugal the suicide is the second cause of death and is increasing in a panorama of general decreased mortality in prisons.

Objectives: To characterize and compare the inmate population with high versus low risk of suicidality, according several variables including the needs for care.

Methods: A descriptive study of a non-probabilistic sample constituted by all male inmates referenced to a forensic psychiatric clinic in Lisbon region, during a year (April 2009-2010), was performed. The data was collect from user and professional interviews and user file.

The instruments, besides a specific questionnaire, includes MINI; BPRS and the Camberwell Assessment of Need, Forensic Version (CANFOR). The suicide risk was defined by C section from MINI and defined as a dichotomic variable: null/low or moderate/high suicide risk.

Results: The sample was composed of seventy nine inmates (median age 36). Major depression was the only diagnostic significantly associated with suicide risk. There was a significant association between moderate/high risk of suicide and the unmet needs rated by users in psychological distress, safety to self, drugs and company domains and unmet needs rated by staff in daytime activities, psychological distress, safety to self and drugs domains.

Conclusion: The suicide prevention is a crucial issue in prisons. The assessment of suicide risk, psychiatric care and care delivery in unmet needs domains may have a positive impact in self harm and suicide incidence.