

## SUICIDAL IDEATION IN THE PREVIOUS TWELFTH MONTHS AMONG PATIENTS ATTENDING A COMMUNITY PSYCHIATRIC OUT-PATIENT CLINIC-RELEVANT PREDICTIVE FACTORS

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**Background:** Predictive factors are used to alert the clinician to the necessity of carrying out a suicide risk assessment in those patients whose demographic and clinical characteristics suggests the possibility of suicide.

**Aim:** To identify demographic and clinical variables that could predict suicidal ideation in psychiatric outpatients.

**Methods:** 150 consecutive return patients attending a psychiatric outpatient clinic were approached and requested to complete a clinician administered semi-structured questionnaire designed to assess the aims of the study. Data was analysed with descriptive statistics, univariate analysis and logistic regression using SPSS Version 17.

**Results:** Of the 150 patients approached with written information, 133 consented to take part in the study giving a response rate of 88.7%. The mean age was 40.6 years (s.d = 12.7). On univariate analysis, there was a statistically significant relationship ( $p < 0.05$ ) between three of the predictor variables (age, marital status and history of self-harm) and the likelihood of experiencing suicidal ideation in the preceding 12 months. However, with all other factors controlled for, only two of the independent variables (history of self-harm and no history of psychiatric inpatient treatment) significantly predicted suicidal ideation in the previous 12 months with odds ratios of 5.409 and 2.836 respectively.

**Conclusion:** Amongst variables studied, having a history of self-harm or no previous history of psychiatric inpatient treatment were the best predictors of suicidal ideation in the preceding year in a population of patients attending a psychiatric outpatient review clinic.