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PSYCHIATRIC MORBIDITY AMONG METHADONE MAINTENANCE THERAPY(MMT) CLIENTS IN UNIVERSITY MALAYA MEDICAL CENTRE (UMMC), KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

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Introduction: Psychiatric comorbidities are very prevalence among heroin dependents yet many MMT sites do not have specific mental health services tailored to this dual diagnosis group. The prevalence rates are ranging from 30-90% depending on settings and tools use to measure the psychiatric morbidity. Both substance use disorder and psychiatric disorder need simultaneous treatment in dual diagnosis population. Failure to address any of the condition may affect and complicate each other condition.

Objectives: To investigate the prevalence of psychiatric morbidity and their psychosocial correlates among heroin dependents seeking MMT treatment in UMMC.

Aims: To determine whether we need to suggest dual diagnosis services in MMT sites.

Methods: A cross sectional, face to face interview was conducted in UMMC from October to December 2008. We interview those stable MMT clients(>one month treatment) who are above 18 years old and consented and fulfilled diagnostic criteria for heroin dependence syndrome in according to DSM IV. MINI Neuropsychiatric Interview(MINI) was used to measure psychiatric morbidity among 100 MMT clients using convenience sampling. The data was analysed using SPSS 16.

Results: Nearly half of the 100 clients (57 %) have at least one psychiatric illness. The most common psychiatric morbidity are the Anti Social Personality, Major Depressive Disorder, Suicidality and Psychotic Disorder Lifetime.

Conclusions: The prevalence of psychiatric morbidity is high as compared to general population.

Our finding is comparable with other studies which show similar result. There is a need for specific intervention for this dual diagnosis group for more effective treatment.