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TECHNICAL VARIABLES RELATED TO THE APPLICATION OF ELECTROCONVULSIVE THERAPY IN THE "HOSPITAL 12 DE OCTUBRE", MADRID

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Background: Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT) is a safe and effective technique widely used in our area. Scientific literature related to the application of this technique is continuously developing, specifically with regard to the placement of the electrodes, the amplitude of the stimulus pulse administered, the initial charge used, and the anesthetic agent involved.

Aims: The primary aim of this study was to analyze technical variables associated with the use of ECT in our hospital, and compare them to the guidelines of the protocol developed in our hospital and international standards.

Methods: We performed a review of Clinical Histories of the patients that were treated with ECT in the "Hospital 12 de Octubre" (Madrid, Spain), in the period comprised between January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008 and December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2009. We collected data related to the application of the technique, socio-demographic variables and clinical profiles. We used descriptive statistics to analyze our data.

Results: During this period, 602 ECT sessions were applied. Placement of the electrodes was unilateral in 58% of subjects with Affective Disorders and 8% of subjects with Schizophrenia. The amplitude of the stimulus pulse was 1 ms. Mean charge administered in the initial and final session was 236.85 mC and 357.16 mC, respectively. Etomidate was used as anesthetic in 68% of cases.

Conclusions: ECT technical variables applied in our hospital are adjusted to guidelines of our area and international recommendations. Longitudinal studies are warranted in order to objectively assess technical variables associated to ECT.