

EXPRESSED EMOTION IN A MIXED SAMPLE OF PSYCHIATRIC, ONCOLOGICAL AND OBESE PATIENTS

S. Gili, E. Gattoni, M. Porro, P. Zeppego, C. Gramaglia

Department of Translational Medicine, Institute of Psychiatry, University of East Piedmont 'A. Avogadro', Novara, Italy

Introduction: Expressed Emotion (EE) reflects the “emotional temperature” of a family. High EE and low EE families can be identified. The degree of family EE correlates with patients' outcome, being a high family EE predictive of a greater likelihood of relapse, an increased need for care and inpatient treatment.

Objectives: Firstly, to evaluate EE, life events and anxiety in a mixed sample of psychiatric, oncological and obese patients recruited from the Psychiatry, Oncology and Nutrition Wards of the “Maggiore della Carità” General Hospital, Novara (Italy). Secondly, to compare these parameters among the three subgroups of patients. Furthermore, we also recruited a cohabiting relative for each patient and compared the relative's EE and EE as perceived by patients.

Methods: 112 patients attending the Psychiatry (n=34), Nutrition (n=56) and Oncology (n=21) Wards were involved. Patients were assessed by means of the following scales: Level of Expressed Emotion (LEE) scale, Paykel Life Events scale, State Trait Anxiety Inventory 1 and 2.

Results: Data collection is ongoing. Anyway, preliminary results suggest that psychiatric patients are more likely to have a longstanding diagnosis, to have received inpatient care but they are less likely to suffer from comorbid organic disorders. Consistently with current literature, obese patients get higher scores than the other subgroups of patients at EE.

Conclusions: Clinical implications are discussed, focusing on the need to carefully address the issue of high EE families in order to reduce the need for inpatient treatment, increase compliance and improve patients' and relatives' quality of life.