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UNMET NEEDS DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE INMATE POPULATION RECEIVING PSYCHIATRIC CARE

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Introduction: Inmates present higher prevalence of mental and physical disorders and are subject of some kind of social exclusion than the general population. The assessment of unmet needs is crucial for care planning.

Objectives: To assess and compare the need for care between male and female inmates undergoing psychiatric treatment.

Aims: Delivery of health and social care in prisons.

Methods: A cross-sectional, descriptive study of a non-probabilistic convenience sample of inmates referenced to a forensic psychiatric clinic in Lisbon region, during a year, was performed. The research protocol, besides a specific questionnaire, includes MINI; BPRS; GAF and Camberwell Assessment of Need, Forensic Version (CANFOR).

Results: Seventy nine males (median age 36) and 35 females (median age 32) were receiving psychiatric treatment at the time of the study. Anti-social personality disorder in men (62%) and major depression in women (62.9%) were the most frequent disorders found. Males more often present moderate to high suicide risk (36.7%) than females (28.6%). The number of unmet needs was significantly increased in males (average 6 ± 2.2) than females (4.3 ± 2.2 ; $p < 0.001$). For males, the more frequent unmet needs concerns sexual expression (79.7%), social benefits (77.2%) and psychological distress (63.3%) and for females it was psychological distress, social benefits (62.9% each) and company (51.4%).

Conclusion: The results indicate that male inmates have higher behavioral risk and more unmet needs than female inmates. The assessment of needs in prisons is important for the development of strategies concerning care, social integration and prevention of criminal recidivism.