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LIAISON PSYCHIATRY IN A SPINAL CORD INJURY UNIT: CHARACTERISTICS OF PATIENTS WITH ACUTE TRAUMATIC SPINAL CORD INJURY (ATSCI)

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Introduction: Despite of the evidence of high psychopathological disorders in patients with ATSCI, few data are available on their psychiatric morbidity prior to the injury.

Objectives: Identify psychiatric morbidity pre-post ATSCI in a sample of patients admitted in the Spinal Injuries Unit of the Vall d' Hebron University Hospital in Barcelona (Spain).

Material and methods: 54 patients with ATSCI patients were admitted between 1<sup>st</sup>.October 2009 and 1<sup>st</sup>.October 2010 . SPSS (version 16.1) was used to analyze the data.

Results: Seventy-six percent of the inpatients with ATSCI (41 cases) were evaluated by the psychiatrist and constitute the study sample. Twenty-seven (66%) were male and 14 (33%) female. The average age of the sample was 41 years with younger males ( $p < 0.05$ ).

Reasons for ATSCI in males were traffic accident (26%), accidental falls and sports accidents (both 18.5%). In women were suicidal attempt by precipitation, fall accident (28.6% both) and traffic accident (21.4%).

41% of men versus 14% of women had a history of substance misuse ( $p < 0.01$ ) while 64% of women versus the 14.8% of males had a prior psychiatric disorder ( $p < 0.01$ ). 72.5% of men with ATSCI caused by traffic accident had used substances prior to the accident, those association was not found for women.

91% of patients underwent psychopharmacological intervention.

Conclusions: ATSCI patients exhibit high psychiatric morbidity and require specialized assessment. The high incidence of substance use associated with road traffic injuries suggests the need to identify risk groups in order to establish effective preventive measures.