

Poster presentation

Mental disorders and dual diagnosis in a sample of homeless people in Athens

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Background

Many studies in different big cities around the world have shown until today a high prevalence of mental disorders and dual diagnosis (major mental disorder and alcohol or drug abuse) among homeless people. So far very little are known regarding mental health of the homeless in our country, where homelessness is a new phenomenon, which continually expands. The purpose of the study is a first record of mental disorders that are observed among the homeless in Athens.

Material and Methods

The study is done within Klimaka's Care Program for homeless. We present the first evidence that were gathered during the period April 2001 until April 2002. 58 people, who are users of the Homeless Support Center, 51 male and 7 female, between 20 to 67 years old, were examined by a psychiatrist.

Results

Based on the diagnosis (DSM-IV) the following evidence on the board came up.

We have to take into consideration, that this particular program is not referred to addicted people. The incidences of drug or alcohol abuse belong to "dual diagnosis" category.

Discussion

This evidence pleads for the high prevalence of mental disorders among the homeless people in Athens. The prevalence of specific disorders, especially of psychotic disorders, are seem to approach or even overcome those

of the homeless in big cities of the west Europe and the U.S.A. Although we are not referred to a fair sample of the people, these findings support the argument that the international dialog regarding the intervention of the mental health among the homeless concerns our country too.

Table 1:

Mental Disorders	n	%
Psychotic Disorders	19	32.7
Affective Disorders	7	12.1
Anxiety Disorders	5	8.6
Personality Disorders	10	17.2
Dementia	2	3.4
Drug Abuse	11	18.9
Alcohol Abuse and related dis.	13	22.4
Without symptoms	8	13.8