

Poster presentation

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Assessing for psychotherapy – the experience of the Outpatient Psychotherapy Unit of the 3rd Department of Psychiatry, AHEPA University Hospital, Thessaloniki

Ioanna Ierodiakonou Benou*, Apostolos Iacovides, Dimitrios Kandyliis and George Kaprinis

Address: 3rd Department of Psychiatry, AHEPA Hospital, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

* Corresponding author

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Background

Evidence has shown that the 2/3 of the psychiatric patients seen in a General Hospital Psychiatric Unit either by Liaison Psychiatry or by Outpatient Clinic are suffering from depression, anxiety or personality disorders and psychoanalytic psychotherapy is accepted to be helpful and effective as the appropriate therapeutic approach.

Materials and methods

The aim of this study is to compare the data of the outpatient assessment service for an initial consultation for Psychotherapy in the Psychotherapy Clinic of the 3rd Department of Psychiatry at the AHEPA University Hospital, between the years 2002–2004. Clinicoepidemiological and psychodynamic data is studied regarding age, sex, education, mode of referrals and diagnosis.

Results

(1) The general profile of the person seeking psychotherapy in our Unit confirms the international data which is mainly female, age 20–40, living in urban areas, single, educated and suffering from depression or anxiety disorder.

(2) Although a hospital as an institution is expected to look after the damaged body and cure somatic problems there was a significant increase in numbers of patients who sought psychotherapy in our Clinic.

(3) The pattern of referrals is changing: a) Increase of referrals by doctors, b) Referrals from patients who had been under psychotherapy in the past in our Clinic

Discussion

The existence of a Psychotherapy Unit in a General Hospital is no longer a taboo for both patients and medical staff. Former patients have proven to be our best ambassadors for psychotherapy.