

Poster presentation

Use of coercive physical measures in a Psychiatric Unit of a University General Hospital in Greece

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from International Society on Brain and Behaviour: 3rd International Congress on Brain and Behaviour
Thessaloniki, Greece. 28 November – 2 December 2007

Published: 17 April 2008

Annals of General Psychiatry 2008, **7**(Suppl 1):S326 doi:10.1186/1744-859X-7-S1-S326

This abstract is available from: <http://www.annals-general-psychiatry.com/content/7/S1/S326>

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Background

Coercive physical measures, such as seclusion, restraint and forced medication, are commonly used in psychiatric care units, though their therapeutic value has been a subject of serious debate [1]. To date, in Greece, there is no data available on the incidence of such measures.

Materials and methods

The form, frequency and duration of coercive physical measures applied on the total number of patients (n=282) admitted in the Psychiatric Unit of the Ioannina University General Hospital during a six-month period (2006-2007) were studied retrospectively. Differences between the group of patients who received coercive physical methods and the patients who didn't receive any coercive method were analyzed by using chi-square and t-tests.

Results

11.0% of admissions had been subjected in some form of coercive physical measures. 9.55%, 6.72% and 1.76% of admissions respectively were affected by seclusion in seclusion room, chemical and mechanical restraint. The mean duration of any one seclusion and mechanical restraint was 64.9h and the mean number of seclusion and mechanical restraint per affected case was 3.58. Statistical analysis between the group subjected into coercive measures and the non-subjected group showed association only with the type of admission.

Conclusions

The results presented here provide epidemiological data on the use of mechanical restraint and seclusion in a psychiatric unit of a General Hospital in Greece. Although there are different patterns in the use of coercive physical measures across European psychiatric units, the results of our study are in accordance with those of previous research [2,3]. Further research in the field may contribute to achieve European standards for the use of coercive measures.

References

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