CHARACTERISTICS OF PATIENTS WITH DEPRESSION IN THE UK INITIATING TREATMENT WITH DULOXETINE AND VENLAFAXINE XR

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Objectives: To describe and compare the demographic and clinical characteristics of adult patients with depression in the UK treated with duloxetine and venlafaxine XR.

Methods: Depressed adults treated with duloxetine or venlafaxine XR between 1/1/2006 and 9/30/2007 were identified using the General Practice Research Database (GPRD), which represents all primary care practices in the UK. Demographic (age and sex) and clinical characteristics (psychiatric and physical comorbid conditions and concomitant medication use) were examined and the characteristics of the two treatment groups were compared using chi-square or t tests, as appropriate.

Results: Of 2,195 patients identified (mean age 47.2 years; 65.8% female), 41% were prescribed duloxetine and 59% were prescribed venlafaxine XR. On average, patients treated with duloxetine were older than patients treated with venlafaxine XR (49.6 years versus 45.5 years; $p < 0.001$). Compared to patients treated with venlafaxine XR, patients treated with duloxetine had higher prevalence of a variety of comorbid physical health conditions, including diseases of the circulatory, digestive, respiratory systems, as well as a higher prevalence of diabetes ($p < 0.01$ for all). Additionally, patients treated with duloxetine had higher prevalence of unexplained pain ($p < 0.001$). Greater proportions of patients treated with duloxetine had prescription utilization of medications in a variety of classes, including anticonvulsants, analgesics, migraine medications, as well as medications used to treat cardiovascular and gastrointestinal disorders ($p < 0.01$ for all).

Conclusions: Depressed patients treated with duloxetine in the UK are slightly older and appear to be in poorer health overall than patients treated with venlafaxine XR.