

Article: 0222

Topic: FC06 - Free Communications 06: Epidemiology and Social Psychiatry, TeleMental Health, Classification, Education and Quality Management

Use of Social Network Facebook for Mental Health Prevention and Counselling

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Introduction: Modern communication facilitates telepsychiatry in native language everywhere in the world. Using social networks (facebook), many pages promote mental health and provide advices for mental health problems. Unfortunately, many were inappropriate, so we decided to give confidential cost-free advice to those who asked for counselling.

Aims: Present one-year experience in counselling using facebook page administered by a psychiatrist in Serbian/Croatian/Bosnian language.

Aims: Present number of page likes, counselled people and most frequent problems.

Methods: Review page statistics and inbox.

Results: The facebook page provides mental health educational content, confidential counselling with a psychiatrist, sharing opinion with other members and group discussion. There are 10.573 members (88% women, 12 % men). Up to 50.000 people are reached weekly. Majority of the members is age 18 to 44 (77%), coming from: ex Yugoslavia countries 8008 (75,7%), EU 1912 (18,1%), Switzerland 1,1%, USA, Canada, Australia 1,2% . There were 95 persons looking for help via inbox. The most frequent problems were: depression 24,2%, marriage/relationship problems 24,2%, emotional reactions after flooding in Bosnia 13,7%, anxiety disorders 13,6%, low self-confidence 6,3%, emotional or physical abuse 6,3%, suicidal 6,3%, psychosis 3,1%, OCD 2,1% and 25,2% asked how to help others. Tele-psychiatric service with GP commenced during the flooding. Supervision has been provided by a psychiatrist. There were 52 reviews with the rates: excellent 92,3%, very good 7,7.

Conclusions: Social networks are useful for mental health promotion, education and counselling people around the world. Problems are acute psychiatric conditions and legal issues (suicidal and abused persons).