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PREVALENCE, SYMPTOM PATTERNS AND COMORBIDITY OF ANXIETY AND DEPRESSIVE DISORDERS IN PRIMARY CARE IN QATAR

A. Bener

Public Health, Weill Cornell Medical College & Hamad Medical Corporation, Doha, Qatar

Aim: To determine the prevalence of anxiety and depressive disorders in Qatari population who attend the primary health care settings and examine their symptoms patterns and comorbidity.

Design: A cross sectional.

Setting: Primary health care center, Qatar

Subjects: A total of 2080 Qatari subjects aged 18 to 65 years were approached and 1660 (79.8%) patients participated in this study.

Methods: The study was based on a face to face interview with a designed diagnostic screening questionnaire which consists of 17 questions about symptoms and signs of anxiety and depression disorders. Physicians determined the definitive diagnosis for depression and anxiety disorders by further checking and screening their symptoms.

Results: The overall prevalence of depression and anxiety disorder was 13.5% and 10.3% respectively. Qatari women were at higher risk for depression (53.1% vs 46.9%) and anxiety disorder (56.7% vs 43.3%) compared to men. More than half of the sufferers with anxiety (56.7%) and depression (53.1%) were Qatari women with a higher frequency in the age group 18

34 years. There were significant differences between men and women with depression in terms of age group ( $p=0.004$ ), marital status ( $p=0.04$ ), occupation ( $p<0.001$ ) and household income ( $p=0.002$ ). Nervousness was the most common symptom in subjects with anxiety disorders (68.4%), whereas sleep difficulty was the most common symptom in subjects with depressive disorder (59.4%).

Conclusion: The depression was more prevalent in Qatari than anxiety disorders. The high risk groups of depression and anxiety disorders were being female, married, middle aged and highly educated.