

In this presentation, we will consider the evidence for comorbidity between ASD and addiction [substance use disorders (SUD)] and explore the possible underlying explanations.

Methods A literature study on similarities between addiction and ASD (at a phenotypical and neurobiological level) as well as a case note review on a year cohort of 120 consecutive admissions in an adult addiction psychiatry unit and 120 admissions in an adult ASD unit.

Results In our addiction psychiatry cohort, 8 (men) on 118 patients were diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder. This is much higher than in the general population (1%). In the ASD cohort, the results are measured at the moment and the results will be presented in the presentation.

Autism spectrum disorders and addiction can both be perceived as developmental disorders in which a genetic predisposition and vulnerability interact with environmental factors. They can be induced by early stress thus affecting the proper functioning of the cortico-striatal dopaminergic regulation systems (and also the HPA axis). In “pure” ADHD this is attributed to a deregulation in the cognitive loops and the “impulsivity” endophenotype. Whereas in cases of ASD without an ADHD component the limbic and sensimotore cortico-striatal regulations loops are also involved.

Conclusions There are clear indications that a possible comorbidity of substance abuse disorder should be considered in cases of individuals with autism spectrum disorders. This finding is important for clinicians to take into account in assessing patients with addiction problems and ASD.

Disclosure of interest The author has not supplied his declaration of competing interest.

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Coercion in psychiatry: Challenges and perspectives

S14

Ethical challenges in the use of coercion

M. Kastrup (Speciallæge i psykiatri)
Copenhagen, Denmark

The use of coercive measures remains one of the great challenges in psychiatry.

Increased focus on patient rights and autonomy, concern from user and relatives organizations as well as from human rights organizations all have contributed to that the use of all kinds of coercion is high on the agenda. And yet, we are still faced with that a number of psychiatric patients will experience that coercive measures are used as part of their treatment.

The EPA Ethical Committee carried out a survey comprising the European associations of psychiatry in which a questionnaire was circulated regarding what the different associations found were the major ethical challenges in their respective countries.

Among the issues that have given rise to particular concern are the use of physical restraints including why some countries avoid physical restraints while other – e.g. Denmark – use it extensively. Why do we find such large differences? Is this due to different approaches to coercion, different traditions? Shortage of resources? Another concern is that certain groups seem more likely to be subject to coercion compared to others. Thus, it has been demonstrated that patients belonging to ethnic minority groups are more likely to experience this.

The paper will focus on ethical problems and issues of concern related to the use of coercion. The focus will be on facets of international relevance with the aim to remain critical towards the use and when needed to strengthen the quality of coercive treatment care.

URL: <http://www.mariannekastrup.dk>

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S15

Does the use of coercion improve the outcome of patients with severe mental disorders?

M. Luciano

University of Naples SUN, Department of Psychiatry, Naples, Italy

Coercive measures have always been part of the psychiatric armamentarium; however, the clinical and ethical dilemma between the use of a “therapeutic” coercion and the loss of patients’ dignity is one of the most controversial issues in mental health practice. According to International guidelines, coercive measures should be adopted only when all the other less restrictive approaches failed and should be considered as the “last restrictive alternative”. Although coercive measures are frequently used to manage patients’ aggressive behaviors and self-harm, refusal of medication and impulsivity, their effect on patients’ outcome is not clear. In fact, the use of coercive measures can reduce patients’ aggressiveness and improve psychiatric symptoms, but can also have a negative impact in terms of therapeutic relationship, engagement with mental health services and self-stigma, arising negative feelings on patients and on mental health professionals. International attempts have been made to improve and harmonize the use of involuntary treatments. Recommendations of good clinical practice on the use of coercive involuntary treatments and forced medications have been proposed by the EUNOMIA consortium, and the effect of coercion on the outcome of patients with severe mental disorders have been described. Results of this study will be reported as well as lessons learnt from other international experiences.

Disclosure of interest The author has not supplied his declaration of competing interest.

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Considering pain to better understand the suicidal process

S16

Psychological pain and interpersonal theory of suicide

A. Apter

Schneiders Childrens Medical Center of Israel, Petach Tikva, Israel

Psychological pain is an important variable in the understanding of suicidal individual.

This presentation describes the how psychological pain interacts with problems in communication to set up risk for serious suicidal behavior and describes some empirical studies supporting a model for using this concept in suicide prevention strategies.

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S17

Pain perception in self-injurious behaviours

C. Schmahl

Central Institute of Mental Health, Psychosomatic Medicine and Psychotherapy, Mannheim, Germany