

P03-57 - NEGATIVE SYMPTOMS AND FUNCTIONING IN FIRST EPISODE PSYCHOSIS AND CHRONIC SCHIZOPHRENIA

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Introduction: Course and outcome in schizophrenia are heterogeneous. Numerous studies have shown an association between the presence of negative symptoms and psychosocial and occupational functioning of patients.

Objectives: To analyse the prevalence of negative symptoms in the course of illness in first episode psychosis and chronic schizophrenia and to establish its relation with the functional outcome.

Methods: 43 patients with a first-episode psychosis (FEP) from our area were compared with 43 chronic schizophrenic patients and 43 normal controls from a parallel area. They were matched one on one for age, gender and years of education. All subjects were compared regarding psychopathology and functional outcome terms. Patients were examined with Positive and Negative Syndrome Scale (PANSS) for clinical symptom. Longitudinal functionality was prospectively assessed with the Clinical Global Impression (CGI) and Global Assessment of Functioning (GAF) rating scales.

Results: We found significant differences between FEP and chronic patients in negative symptom severity ($t = -4.97$, $p < 0.001$) and global assessment of functioning ($t = 7.58$, $p < 0.001$). There was no statistically significant difference between the two groups in PANSS positive and general components or Clinical Global Impression. Negative symptom severity was associated with poorer GAF ratings in first episode psychosis and chronic schizophrenia.

Conclusions: Negative symptoms appear to be persistent. In our study negative symptom severity was associated with social and functional impairment, defined as Global Assessment of Functioning Scale score of less than or equal to 60.