

SUICIDALITY IN PSYCHIATRIC INPATIENTS AND ECONOMIC CRISIS IN GREECE

Z. Stefanakis¹, A. Vgontzas¹, M. Basta¹, M. Tsougkou², A. Kastanaki³, J. Fernandez-Mendoza⁴, M. Sfakiotaki¹

¹Psychiatry, ²Child Psychiatry, ³Forensic Medicine, School of Medicine/University of Crete, Heraklion, Greece, ⁴Psychiatry, Penn State College of Medicine, Hershey, PA, USA

Introduction: Suicide attempts/thoughts are common among psychiatric inpatients and they are burden for the individual, the family and the health system. According to published reports, suicidality in Greece has increased significantly, because of the current economic crisis.

Objective: Examine the profile of psychiatric inpatients of the Psychiatric Department of the University Hospital of Crete(PD/UHC), presenting with suicide attempts/ thoughts.

Aim: Identify risk factors associated with attempted suicide or suicidal thoughts.

Methods: One hundred forty four out of 444 (33%) inpatients admitted in the PD/UHC between Nov 2011- Aug 2012 presented suicidal attempts/thoughts. Data were analyzed using the Pearson's chi-square test and multivariable regression models.

Results: Major Depression, substance abuse, female gender and having a spouse were associated with suicidality in the entire group. Because there was an interaction between gender and having children, the analysis was stratified by gender. Risk factors for suicidality in men were having children (OR=2.26) and shorter time since onset of illness (OR=0.96), and in women having a spouse (OR=2.47). Low income and unemployment were not significant predictors of suicidality.

Conclusions: Major Depression, substance abuse, female gender, family status and recent onset of illness appear to be risk factors associated with suicidality in psychiatric inpatients. Unemployment/low income, did not correlate with suicidality. Our findings do not support the popular belief of increased suicidality due to the current economic crisis. Finally, there is a need for further understanding of how family, its dynamics and potential stressors associated with it, may influence suicidality.