

scores. Specifically, participants who kept feelings to themselves tended to have higher CES-D scores than those who let their feelings show, while those who sought out authority scored lower on the CES-D, on average than those that did not seek authority.

**Conclusions:** Healthcare staff are under greater stress and pressure during national emergencies, and to regulate emotions during consistent high-stress, our preliminary data suggest that suppression and distraction strategies are dominant. Suggesting that staff prefer or have little choice but to focus on work. Alternatively, perhaps they are overwhelmed to the extent that avoidance and distraction are more accessible strategies. Further analysis of our data may help us understand more.

**Keywords:** stress; emotion regulation

### EPP0406

#### The digital era and the psychiatric follow up during COVID-19 pandemic– are we ready?

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**Introduction:** The pandemic caused by the SARS CoV-2 virus (COVID-19) has a profound effect in the health care system (HCS). The therapeutic effect of communication skills is well known. Psychiatric patients are a vulnerable population and remote care via telephone was one of the first implemented measures during the lockdown.

**Objectives:** The aim is to highlight the potential benefits and risks of remote follow up, according to the scientific evidence currently available.

**Methods:** Non-systematic review of the literature with the selection of scientific articles published in the last year. The search was performed in Pubmed database with the following Mesh terms: “COVID-19”, “psychiatry”, and “health communication”. Complementary references were also included.

**Results:** For those with a stable psychiatric condition, remote appointments may guarantee the adequate follow up in a safe way throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. However, telephonic appointments are associated with a limited ability to perform psychopathological examination. A better assessment can be achieved if video call is used. Also, data protection and the ability of giving informed consent by psychiatric patients should be addressed. Additional training should be considered. A subgroup of patients with severe mental illness may require face-to-face visits.

**Conclusions:** COVID-19 pandemic is an unprecedented crisis and telemedicine is now emerging as an alternative. Remote consultation has advantages and, in some situations, it may replace or complement the in-person visits. Since social isolation is one of the most effective measures, digital means constitute a window of opportunity for the HCS.

**Keywords:** COVID-19; psychiatry; health communication

### EPP0407

#### Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdown period on the number of hospitalizations for acute mania

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**Introduction:** COVID-19 pandemic has affected social interaction and healthcare worldwide especially during the period of lockdown. As a result of this pandemic in Tunisia, the activity of hospital services and all non-emergency acts, in several specialties have been reduced. In psychiatry, such measures have not been taken. In the social zeitgeber hypothesis social rhythm disrupting life events such as eating, activity, and social patterns, may lead to the onset of manic episodes.

**Objectives:** The objective of this study was to evaluate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the frequency of acute mania in the context of bipolar disorder during the lockdown and post lockdown period compared to the same period during last year in a psychiatric department in Tunisia.

**Methods:** We assessed the number of hospitalizations in our department for acute mania in the context of bipolar disorder during the lockdown period in our country, (from March 1st and May 30, 2020) and during the two months following it. We compared this frequency to that of the previous year during the same periods.

**Results:** During the lockdown period, 17 patients were hospitalized for acute mania in the context of bipolar disorder. Sixty-seven patients were hospitalized in 2019 during the same period for acute mania. Nine hospitalizations for acute mania in the post lockdown period (between June and July 2020), were noted compared to 16 hospitalizations in the same period in 2019.

**Conclusions:** Lockdown seemed to have a protective effect from affective episodes in bipolar disorder. Perceiving increased connectedness among families may explain these findings.

**Keywords:** protective factors; covid 19; acute mania

### EPP0408

#### COVID-19 pandemic: Regarding alcohol consumption

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**Introduction:** On March, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the COVID-19 outbreak a global pandemic. Social isolation, unemployment and financial difficulties can have

an impact on mental health and trigger the use of alcohol as a form of coping. Since the beginning of this pandemic, the WHO had warned the general public of the potential risks of increased alcohol consumption, which might result in a higher incidence of alcohol use disorders (AUD) in future.

**Objectives:** The aim is to do a review of the literature of alcohol consumption during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Methods:** Non-systematic review of the literature with selection of scientific articles published in the last 7 months; by searching the Pubmed databases, the following MeSH terms were used: COVID-19; alcohol consumption.

**Results:** A recent article in The Lancet suggested that mental health and alcohol use during the pandemic, a major public health concern, are worthy of attention. Market research showed that alcohol sales increased in several countries compared to the same time last year. However, with the closure of several drinking places, sales are not in themselves reliable enough estimates of alcohol consumption. On the other hand, economic crises can lead to a reduction in alcohol consumption, due to financial problems or the risk of unemployment.

**Conclusions:** The present global circumstance is unique, and there is a need for further research on the relationship between alcohol consumption and COVID-19 to understand its long-term effects and develop specific prevention programs for this population.

**Keywords:** COVID-19; alcohol use disorders (AUD); alcohol consumption

## EPP0409

### Stress and affective disorders in COVID-19 pandemic: On-line survey of russian respondents in different cities of residence

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**Introduction:** The psychological stress associated with the COVID-19 pandemic has a complex multifactorial nature.

**Objectives:** The aim: to evaluate the level of stress during the COVID-19 pandemic in the Russian-speaking population with (-out) affective disorders in different cities of residence.

**Methods:** The data obtained from an online survey of 4803 Russian-speaking respondents (age over 18) from March 30 to May 18, 2020. The survey included social, demographic and the history of affective disorders data. The anxiety distress level was evaluated with the Psychological Stress Measure (PSM-25).

**Results:** Individuals from sub-cohort of Russian cities with populations less than one million had higher stress levels ( $M=135.39$ ) compared to Moscow ( $M=129.47$ ;  $p=0.003$ ) or St.-Petersburg ( $M=126.63$ ;  $p<0.001$ ). However, stress scores in respondents with a history of affective disorders correspond to the average stress level according to PSM-25. Respondents without affective disorders from St.-Petersburg reported lower stress levels ( $M=92.88$ ) than respondents from Moscow ( $M=100.47$ ;  $p<0.001$ ) and Russian cities

with less than one million population ( $M=98.4$ ;  $p<0.001$ ). Average stress scores from St.-Petersburg and other Russian cities show a low level of stress on PSM-25, which indicates psychological adaptation. Stress scores from Moscow have borderline values between low and medium levels.

**Conclusions:** Our study showed that the city of residence and affective disorders status significantly affect stress levels in Russian population. These factors could be further used in individual psychological support strategies.

**Keywords:** COVID-19; stress; affective disorders; pandemic

## EPP0411

### Web-based tools applied to therapy and counseling during the COVID-19 pandemic

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**Introduction:** Web-based tools allowed the provision of psychological counseling and therapy at-distance during the COVID-19 lockdown. Nevertheless, psychologists' attitudes towards the adoption of these tools and its impact in their professional practices need to be further explored.

**Objectives:** The objective was to study the use of web-based tools on psychological practices before and during COVID-19 lockdown, trying to identify changes on psychologists' professional practices related to the pandemic, as well as to explore factors that could have affected such changes.

**Methods:** One-hundred and eight psychologists filled-in an online survey, developed for the purposes of this study, during mandatory lockdown. The study was disseminated by mailing list, social networks, and by the Portuguese Psychologists Association.

**Results:** The results have shown that psychologists kept providing their services during lockdown thanks to the adoption of web-based tools. Although psychologists have recognized that additional precautions were needed for at-distance practice in comparison to in-person interventions, the experience of using ICT technologies in clinical practice was described as positive, ensuring clients' adherence with positive results. Additionally, despite psychological services were maintained on a larger scale by psychologists with more years of experience, professionals with average experience stated more favorable attitudes towards the use of web-based tools in counseling and therapy.

**Conclusions:** Although the implementation of ICT based practice was enforced by current circumstances, the experience that psychologists gathered and shared during the lockdown can guide future professional practice, improving and fostering the replication of best practices at distance.

**Keywords:** Web-based tools; Therapy; e-health; COVID-19