PREDICTORS OF SUICIDAL BEHAVIOURS: ANALYSIS OF FOUR YEARS OF EMERGENCY ROOM PSYCHIATRIC CONSULTATION

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Purpose: The annual global suicide mortality rate is 16 per 100,000 and suicide attempts are 20 times more frequent. We aimed at comparing patients referring to the emergency room (ER) for self-inflicted injury vs those needing psychiatric consultation for other reasons, in order to assess possible predictors of self-injury.

Methods: Determinants of ER psychiatric consultations were studied prospectively during the period 2008-2011 at the 'Maggiore' Hospital in Novara. A multivariate analysis was performed using a logistic regression in order to assess the potential predictors of self-injury behaviors. Results are expressed as Odds Ratio (OR) with 95% Confidence Intervals (95%CI). Statistical significance was set at $p \leq 0.05$.

Results: In a sample of 1888 psychiatric consultations, 280 (14.8%) were due to self-inflicted injuries. Female gender (OR: 1.51; p=0.005) was found to positively correlate with attempted suicides, whereas unemployment (OR: 0.68; p=0.013) and being in the colder months of the year (OR: 0.75; p=0.043) were found to be negative correlated. A positive trend without statistical significance was observed for foreign nationality, being not married and living with parents/own family vs a negative trend was found for history of psychiatric disorders.

Conclusions: In accordance with other studies, we observed the female gender positively correlates with attempted suicides and sunlight may act as a trigger. In contrast with literature, individuals with a permanent job would be at higher risk of self-injury behaviours, whereas having a history of psychiatric disorders and being under the care of a psychiatrist might be a protective predictor.