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QUALITY OF LIFE AND MORTALITY IN ELDERLY PATIENTS WITH SCHIZOPHRENIA: A PROSPECTIVE COHORT STUDY

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Introduction: The increase of elderly schizophrenia patients during the last few decades is a major health issue. Although life expectancy increased for patients with schizophrenia, there is a greater rate of the occurrence of somatic illnesses, and premature mortality remains 2 to 3 times higher in these patients than in general population.

Objectives: To prospectively assess health care access, quality of life, functional status, and rates and causes of death in a cohort of elderly schizophrenia patients.

Methods: We initiated a national epidemiologic 5-year cohort study including a large sample of schizophrenic patients aged 60 or more. The first aim was to assess the geriatric psychiatric services provided by a large sample (n=108) of departments of psychiatry in France (n=829). The second aim was to assess the number of elderly schizophrenia patients followed by each participating centre. Finally, we prospectively assess some demographic, clinical and biological variables, as well as quality of life indexes.

Results: The geriatric psychiatric services are heterogeneously spread in French territory. Schizophrenic patients aged 60 and more represent 15% of French public psychiatric department activity. The cohort is actually in course of constitution.

Conclusions: Our data may help to identify factors associated with increased morbidity and mortality in elderly schizophrenia.