

The Multidisciplinary Approach to Mood Disorders

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Introduction

An analysis of the multidisciplinary treatment of mood disorders used at the short stay psychiatric unit (SSPU) in Mater Dei Hospital, Malta was carried out.

Objectives

The modalities considered were:

- Pharmacological therapy
- Electroconvulsive therapy
- Psychological therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Social worker involvement

Aims

To record whether a multidisciplinary approach (MDA) was being used and whether this affected the clinical outcome.

Methods

The data used was obtained from a logbook in the SSPU and set up as an excel spreadsheet.

The patient selection criteria was:

1. Diagnosed as having mood disorders (unipolar or bipolar depression)
2. Admitted for the first time to SSPU (with no previous admissions to an acute psychiatric ward) in 2008
3. The multidisciplinary approach was defined as the use of 3 or more modalities of treatment.

Results

1. 87 patients were selected. In group 1 : 6 patients received MDA and group 2 : 81 patients did not receive MDA
2. 50% of patients in group 1 and 48% of patient in group 2 belonged to the age group of 46-55 years.
3. 100% for group 1 and 73.3% in group 2 were females.
4. 50% of patient were re-admitted in group one while 58% of patients were re-admitted in group 2.
5. MDA prolonged the average duration till next re-admission by 81 days.
6. The cost per bed is approximately **300euros** daily, thus saving **24,300 euros** per patient when MDA is used.

Conclusions

MDA improves patient outcome by preventing or prolonging re-admissions.

This should be emphasized in the female population and in the age group of 46-55 years.