

P02-16 - E.R. ADMISSIONS OF IMMIGRANTS PRESENTING WITH PSYCHIATRIC SYMPTOMS: A RETROSPECTIVE STUDY IN EASTERN PIEDMONT

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Objectives: The immigrant population in Italy is currently increasing, particularly, foreigners in East Piedmont raised by 16,8 % last year. We aim to compare immigrant and Italian patients' Emergency Room (ER) admissions due to psychiatric symptoms.

Results: Of the 658 admissions we observed, 13.1 % of ER contacts concerned immigrants mostly coming from Russia, Albania, Morocco and Romania, consistently with migration streams in East Piedmont. Compared to the Italians, immigrant patients were younger (35.70; SD = 10.56 versus 44.78; SD = 16.57) and more frequently admitted for alcohol and substance abuse/withdrawal. Italians had a higher probability of having a psychiatric history including previous hospitalizations and contacts with Mental Health Services (OR = 2.60; CI 95 %: 1.64-4.12). The presence of social/relational problems associated with admission was significantly lower among the Italians (OR = 0.55; CI 95 %: 0.35-0.88).

Conclusions: Preliminary data suggest that ER utilisation by immigrants may represent their main way to primary health care. Monitoring ER contacts may provide relevant information for the development of culturally sensitive Mental Health Services.

Methods: We considered Italian and immigrant patients with psychiatric symptoms who were admitted to the ER Department of Novara during a period of 13 months. We compared sociodemographic (gender, age, education, occupational history, marital status, living circumstances) clinical-anamnestic (history of psychiatric illness, presentation symptoms, previous contacts with Substance Abuse/Mental Health Services, social/relational problems) and admission (type of admission, intervention and discharge) characteristics of the two groups (Italians versus immigrants).