

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