

Poster presentation

Epidemiological analysis of completed suicide in the Greek countryside: a retrospective study

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Background

The aim of our study is to describe the epidemiology and characteristics of all suicide deaths among patients suffering from mental disorders in our region.

Material and Methods

In order to access all these features we reviewed 21 suicide deaths in adults, during the period 1992–2002 in our area (Fthiotida).

Results

Eighteen (18) of the patients were male, 3 female. Mean age was 43 years, with an age range from 19 to 74 years. Only 3 patients had academic education. Most of the victims were farmers. Six (6) patients were unemployed. The events occurred mainly during period April–May (7/21). According to their medical history they suffered from depression (7 patients), psychosis (5 patients), ethanol–drug abuse (4 patients), bipolar disorder (3 patients), personality disorders (2 patients). Twelve (12) patients were under medical treatment for psychosis (5 cases), depression (4 cases), bipolar disorder (3 cases). Nine (9) of them refused to take their treatment or visit the psychiatrist during the last two months prior their death. They did not have family support. A family history of suicide was recorded in two cases. Previous attempts of suicide were documented in 3 cases, whereas violent behavior in their environment was reported in 6 cases. History of hospitalization for any psychiatric disorder was detected in 10 cases. Causes of death in order of frequency were hanging (13 patients), jumping from high places (3 patients), drug intoxication (3 patients), fire gun shooting (2 patients).

Discussion

Hanging was the predominant method in all suicide deaths. History of hospitalization for psychiatric disorders was documented in half of the cases. A minority had a documented history of prior suicide attempts. Exposure to recent stressful life events was the trigger point to suicide. These findings could help health professionals be more effective in the prevention of suicide morbidity and mortality.