Comparing stigma towards patients with bipolar disorder in two samples: non-psychiatric physicians and psychiatrists from a national reference center.

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Background. In mental disorders, literature has shown that stigma is one of the major barriers for accurate diagnosis and treatment. Nonetheless there is little information regarding stigma towards psychiatric patients by different groups of health teams or specialties. This investigation has the objective of comparing stigma (Social Distance) towards patients with bipolar disorder in two samples: Non psychiatrist or psychiatrists.

Method. We obtain a sample of 183 Chilean physicians, 78 being psychiatrists or psychiatrists in formation, and 105 doctors with other specialties. Both samples were asked to answer, as a stigma proxy, Link' Social Distance Scale (SD) using a vignette of a patient with Bipolar Disorder. For the analysis of the data obtained in both groups a P-Student Hypothesis test was applied.

Results. The questions in the SD Scale have been based in two factors: "Closeness & social interaction", and "Intimacy and Trust". Differences were observed for both factors between the two samples, but they were non-significant for "Closeness & social interaction". On the other hand, psychiatrists show more acceptance regarding "Intimacy and Trust" than non-psychiatrists, a difference that was statistically significant.

Conclusion. Non-psychiatric physicians show greater stigma towards Bipolar patients in the context of "Intimacy and Trust", but similar acceptance regarding "Closeness & social interaction" when compared to psychiatrists.

Would you be friends with someone like...?

Would you be in a relationship with someone like...?

If you had children, Would you let someone like... took care of them?

Sources.

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