The Features of Outpatient Schizophrenia Treatment in Lithuania

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Introduction

The fast development of antipsychotics leads to various treatment choices for patients with schizophrenia. Widespread use of high doses antipsychotics is often replaced by prescribing more than one antipsychotic at the same time, as well as their combination with other types of psychotropic drugs [1,2].

Methods

One-year data of 172 schizophrenia patients' medical records of visits to the primary mental health center were collected.

Results

- More than 40 different options for antipsychotic treatment were observed (*Table 1*)
- 58.1 % of cases included polytherapy
- Longer illness duration led to a higher number of antipsychotic medications ($r=0.188$ ($p<0.05$))
- The number of psychotropic medications got higher with higher number of visits to the primary mental health center ($r=0.195$ ($p<0.05$))
- Treatment corrections were more common with a lower number of hospitalizations ($p<0.001$)
- Long-acting injectable antipsychotics were chosen in 22.2 % of the cases
- 67.6 % of corrected treatment cases included concomitant psychotropic medications

Conclusion

1. In more than half of schizophrenia cases outpatient treatment included polytherapy
2. The number of antipsychotic medications got higher with longer duration of mental illness
3. The number of psychotropic medications got higher with more frequent visits to the primary mental health center

Table 1. The most frequent outpatient antipsychotic treatment among study participants

Antipsychotic medications	Frequency, %
Olanzapine	14.5
Quetiapine	14.0
Quetiapine and Risperidone	9.9
Olanzapine and Risperidone	8.7
Risperidone	5.2
Haloperidol Decanoate and Olanzapine	4.7
Olanzapine and Aripiprazole	4.7
Quetiapine and Aripiprazole	4.7
Paliperidone palmitate	3.5
Haloperidol and Olanzapine	2.3
Quetiapine and Ziprazidone	1.7
Quetiapine and Amisulpiride	1.2
Amisulpiride	1,2
Haloperidol Decanoate and Risperidone	1,2
Risperidone and Levomepromazine	1,2

1. Centorrino F, Eakin M, Bahk W-M et al. Inpatient antipsychotic drug use in 1998: comparisons to 1993 and 1989. *Am. J. Psychiatr.* 2002; Nov;159 (11):1932–35.

2. Keks NA, Altson K, Hope J et al. Use of antipsychosis and adjunctive medications by an inner urban community psychiatric service. *Aust. N.Z. J. Psychiatry.* 1999; Dec 1;33:896–01. doi. org/10.1046/j.1440-1614.1999.00639.x