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Introduction

Patients with a variety of health disorders benefit from improved treatment where psychologists are part of hospital medical staff. Unfortunately, too often patients fail to receive psychological services that help them manage their disorders. Psychologists employed in health care settings work directly with patients, conducting mental assessment, diagnosing mental disorders, and performing psychological interventions. Up today the empirical data regarding the state of the art of psychological intervention in the hospital setting are still scarce.

Purpose/Methods

The aim of this retrospective analysis was to describe one year experience with mental health assessment and psychological intervention in a cardiac, neurological and pneumological Rehabilitation and Subacute Care Hospital in Italy. We conducted assessments through clinical interviews and personality tests. The intervention consisted of brief psychotherapy with patients and caregiver, individually or in groups, mainly focusing on mood disturbances but addressing also psychoeducational themes such as stress reduction, smoking withdrawal, and avoidance of unhealthy behaviours.

Results

Seven hundred eighty-five patients (57% males, mean age 67 ± 13) of 2485 (31,6%) were referred to psychologists; of them 665 (84,7%) were clinically interviewed and the rest completed batteries of tests. The main mental health problems were anxiety (23%) and depression (14%). The intervention consisted of psychotherapy sessions with patients (1754) and with care-givers (490), and psychoeducational group sessions (1144 health education, 838 relaxation). At discharge there was an improvement in mood disturbance, with a reduction in both anxiety (11%) and depression (8%).

Conclusions

Our data show the need to assess anxiety and depression, as main mental health problems in chronic diseases, and the efficacy of a brief psychological intervention to reduce the mood disturbance in hospital. It is necessary to accurately select patients who need psychological care and a real consensus about how to organize psychology services in hospital and what patients should be referred is recommended.

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Biographical „Work“ Experience
Evolved with the Help of the Art

Therapy in the Cases of the Men Who
Had Suffered a Spinal Cord Injury

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Introduction

80 percent of the patients who suffer a spinal cord injury are men. The majority of them are active, social persons whose aim is to return to the normal life. The traditional male role in the society prevent men from the help search. The biographical perspective of the men who had suffered a spinal cord injury was analysed as an event rearranging and restructuring their whole life and changing their identity. The social work and team work in the rehabilitation institutions were analysed.

Purpose/Methods

Analysis of the biographical narrative. The biographical narrative was analysed with the help of the art therapy. The art therapy was looked at as an empowering measure. The biographies of the men who had suffered a spinal cord injury revealed the strategies employed when overcoming the difficulties, their psychological and social problems. The efficiency of the art therapy employing the biographical „work“ as a tool was analysed.

Results

The spinal cord injury has an impact on the person as well as all other his life aspects including his social and family relations, economic welfare, and professional aspects. In our case, the collapse of the standard male biography in the background of the trauma was analysed. We tried to perceive the different biographical trajectories and at the same time the different ways of the identity construction. So, we tried to show that there are other stages in the survival of the trauma.

Conclusions

The biographical work applied in the social work helped to understand the life histories of the patients, their present situations. With the help of the reflexion expressions the future could be constructed. This research opens further possibilities. The results of the research are the initial instrument in the further biographical „work“ applied with the help of the art therapy in the cases of the men who have suffered a spinal cord injury.

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The associated factors in depression
and psychophysical adaptation
among patients with Hansen's disease
in Lo-Sheng Sanatorium

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