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Evaluation of mental health of HIV patients

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Most patients with serious, progressive illness confront a range of psychological challenges, including the prospect of real and anticipated losses, worsening quality of life, the fear of physical decline and death, and coping with uncertainty. HIV infection brings additional challenges due to the rapidly changing treatment developments and outlook. The aim was to investigate the prevalence of and factors associated with anxiety and depression among adult HIV-infected patients.

Method: The study was conducted at Infectious Disease Service, University Hospital Center of Tirana during 2018 including 85 HIV-positive patients who also self-administered the Hospital Anxiety and Depression (HAD) scale; those with score >8 on HAD-A/D were considered to be at high risk of anxiety or depression.

Results: Associations between socio-demographic, psychosocial, and ART-related clinical factors and risk of depression or anxiety were investigated using multivariable logistic regression. Among patients assessed 28.5% had symptoms of anxiety, 34% had symptoms of depression, and 21.0% had both. Recentness of HIV diagnoses ($p=0.03$) was associated with elevated odds of anxiety. Older age ($p<0.01$), higher educational attainment ($p<0.01$), employment ($p<0.01$), support from family / friends ($p<0.01$), and sleep disturbance ($p<0.01$), and number of ART regimen switches ($p<0.01$) were associated with risk of depression, while neither sex nor transmission route showed any associations. There were no significant associations with HIV-specific clinical factors including current CD4+ T cell count and current viral load.

Conclusion: Individuals in HIV care should be screened and treated for depression and anxiety in integration mental health services.

Biography

I am a medical doctor, Infectious diseases specialist from Tirana, Albania. I have graduated on 1992 from the Faculty of Medicine, University of Tirana, Albania. In 2002 I commenced the four year residency in infectious diseases and work at the Service of Infectious Diseases at the University Hospital centre "Mother Teresa" in Tirana. Currently I am doing Phd in infectious diseases from Tirana University, in Tirana, Albania.

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