

CHARACTERISTICS OF POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER IN PATIENTS WITH AN INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

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Background: People with an intellectual disability (ID) are likely to experience traumatic events and more vulnerable to its disruptive effects and thus to post traumatic stress disorders (PTSD). Little is known about how these PTSDs present themselves in patients with ID and whether this presentation differs from patients without an ID.

Objectives: The aim of the present study was to compare PTSD symptomatology in psychiatric outpatients with borderline to mild ID and outpatients without ID in naturalistic out-patient samples from psychiatric secondary care.

Subjects and methods: From June 1st 2010 to March 15th 2012, 56 patients were diagnosed with PTSD. Using Routine Outcome Monitoring (ROM), 45 patients (80.4%) had complete data on both the Impact of Events Scale Revised (IES-R) and the Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI). They were compared to 45 gender- and age-matched non-ID patients diagnosed with PTSD in the same period.

Results: Preliminary results show that there are some small differences in general psychological symptom patterns between ID and non-ID patients with PTSD as shown on the subscales obsession-compulsion, psychoticism and depression of the BSI. On the IES-R, there was no difference between ID and non-ID patients. There was no difference in symptomatology between patients with borderline or mild ID.

Conclusion: PTSD symptomatology does not differ in ID patients compared to non-ID patients. Consequently, ID patients deserve the same evidence based care.