
Clinical and Social Determinants of Duration of Untreated Psychosis (DUP)

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I. Introduction:

DUP is defined as the period between the onset of psychotic symptoms and the beginning of treatment. DUP is often prolonged and associated with poor prognosis.

II. Objectives:

*Identify the DUP in a population of patients hospitalized, for a first episode of psychosis, in the psychiatric "A" service in Sfax Tunisia.

* Investigate the clinical and social determinants of DUP.

III. Methods:

This is a retrospective study of 50 cases of patients, with a first episode of psychosis, admitted to the psychiatric "A" service during the month of August 2014.

Sociodemographic and clinical characteristics were summarized using a comprehensive semi structured interview.

IV. Results:

Sociodemographic data:

The average age of our patients was 37 years.

74% of participants were male.

62% of patients were single.

76% had a low socioeconomic level.

Clinical data:

The mean DUP was 72.13 weeks with a range of 0 weeks to 336 weeks.

Data analysis shows that longer DUP was significantly correlated with:

The insidious onset ($p = 0.00$),

The late age at onset ($p = 0.01$),

The predominance of negative symptoms ($p = 0.04$),

The illiteracy ($p = 0.008$),

The absence of family involvement in help-seeking ($p = 0.01$).

There was no evidence of an association between DUP and any of the other variables considered: gender, living alone, socioeconomic level and subtypes of schizophrenia.

V. Conclusion:

The present findings suggest that DUP is influenced both by aspects of the clinical course and by the social context.