

P01-203 - PRESENTATION OF A SPECIALIZED OUTPATIENT UNIT FOR INTERNET AND PC ADDICTION -FIRST YEAR OF OPERATIONS, RESULTS, RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

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Objectives: The objective of this presentation is to present the experience from the first year of operation of the Specialized Outpatient Unit for Internet and PC Addiction created in the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry of the Hippokration General Hospital of Thessaloniki, Greece.

Methods: We present data from the first 40 adolescents who attended our service. Demographics and PC / Internet usage statistics are presented along with final diagnosis and treatment where it was deemed appropriate, both for Internet addiction disorder but also any co-morbid psychiatric disorder. We describe the diagnostic tests that are employed and their appropriateness for this goal and the therapeutic methods including psychotherapy (a sixteen session CBT protocol) and pharmacotherapy. Recommendations for effectively setting up similar services are given.

Results: All cases involved teenage boys (mean age 15 yrs) who abused the Internet primarily to play on-line games. In all cases it was the parents who initiated contact with our Unit. In 75% of the cases the primary concern was addiction to the Internet per se while in 25% of the cases it was the drop in school achievement that prompted the parents to seek a possible explanation in excessive Internet use.

Conclusions: During the first year of operations the Unit has treated with success a variety of cases of Internet addiction disorder and made an effort to alert the public to the new phenomenon. A need for similar services is becoming evident throughout Europe as they have already proliferated in Asia.