

Study of co-occurring suicidal and psychotic symptoms in inpatients at mathari psychiatric hospital, nairobi, kenya

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Abstract:

To investigate the prevalence of suicidal symptoms and their co-occurrence with psychotic symptoms in patients at Mathari Hospital. **METHOD:** A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted in June 2004 on inpatients at Mathari Hospital, the national psychiatric teaching and referral hospital. Data on sociodemographic characteristics and clinical diagnoses of inpatients were extracted from their clinical notes. The Structured Clinical Interview for DSM-IV (SCID) Screening Module was used to elicit information on psychotic and suicidal symptoms. **RESULTS:** A total of 691 patients were interviewed, of whom 308 (44.6%) had suicidal symptoms. There were significant positive correlations ($p < .05$) between psychotic and suicidal symptoms diagnosed according to the criteria of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition (DSM-IV) suggesting co-existence of these 2 sets of disorders. **CONCLUSIONS:** There is a high prevalence of suicidal symptoms in the patients admitted at Mathari Hospital with predominantly psychotic disorders. Although these prevalence rates are much lower than those reported elsewhere, especially for schizophrenia, they are still a cause for concern given that these suicidal symptoms were not being managed