

PS1.216

Focusing on the tight relationship between mental health and family violence: ||practice and training implications

Lodewijk Pas

WONCA SIGFV, Academic Center of General Practice, Catholic University Leuven, Belgium

Corresponding author: Dr Lodewijk Pas, University Leuven, Department of General Practice, Wezembeek-Oppem, Belgium. E-mail: lodewijkpas@gmail.com

Background & Aim: A strong relationship exists between alcohol and substance abuse, anxiety disorders, depression, eating disorders and family violence. This symposium addresses these often neglected relationships, rarely adequately addressed in primary care and also mental health care.

Method: An update will be given about causal relationships and consequences of mental health problems and family violence in a broad perspective. Case presentations will be used to illustrate interrelationships between different mental health problems and different forms of family violence. The audience will be presented with several conceptual models for improving detection, assessment and counselling in situations where mental health and family violence are intertwined.

Results: Mental health problems need more specific attention as causes and consequences of family violence. Implications for practice and training will be discussed. Practitioners are invited to apply structured care strategies to deal with these relationships when caring for individuals and families affected by family violence. The perspective of the victim and perpetrator should be considered and a strategy should be defined in all practices taking into account local needs and resources.

Conclusions: General practice should pay more attention to identification of violent relationships when clients present with mental health problems as well as to identification of mental health problems in families affected by family violence. Consequences of violence on mental and social wellbeing merit active follow up and support. Training is needed at all levels, starting from undergraduate training to continuing medical education. A holistic and a more mental health oriented care approach - including implementation of adapted psychosocial care models - may help to decrease reoccurrence as well as consequences of family violence. More research is needed to apply specific organization models recognizing more the importance of the relationship between mental health and family violence.