

FROM EDITORS

Dear Readers,

As we were faced with the unprecedented Coronavirus Pandemic, health services around the world: doctors, nurses, laboratory staff and public health workers have been working hard and uninterrupted to serve the official institutions and organizations with which they are affiliated.

Mentally ill patients with suspected coronavirus infection or comorbidities with COVID-19 are treated in specially prepared hospital wards, primarily psychiatric units.

While all routine on-site operations of psychiatric day care facilities were suspended, the necessary mental healthcare services are available online. Stable outpatients are managed via live video or teleconferencing, but those with unstable mental state are scheduled in-person appointments. There are no delays concerning administration of depot/LAI antipsychotic medication.

Following the models adopted in other European countries, the Polish Psychiatric Association proposes, recommends and constantly updates the standards of care for psychiatric patients who are carriers or potential carriers of COVID-19, so as to provide guidance for other medical professionals on management of agitation or delirium in confirmed and suspected coronavirus cases. We are therefore regularly publishing all up-to-date information and guidelines concerning psychopharmacotherapy, e.g. with neuroleptics – clozapine and depot/LAI formulations, or mood stabilizers – e.g. lithium.

A telephone line has been created for healthcare professionals who require psychiatric or psychological support. University courses are delivered in online settings.

Pandemic and associated severe stress could act as a trigger mechanism. It can be assumed that many people are soon to suffer from symptoms of acute stress response. This “after-the-pandemic” effect may manifest itself through symptoms of depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress, affecting all the more severely those with anxiety-depressive disorder, and potentially resulting in greater use of psychoactive substances across afflicted populations.

Therefore, we open this volume with a case report (by Skoneczny et al.) of a COVID-19-positive patient suffering from organic mental disorders and alcohol dependence syndrome, thus shedding some light on a perspective of mental health professionals working in a psychiatric hospital setting on management of patients with coronavirus disease.

We believe that this experience could prove invaluable for other mental health specialists and therefore sharing it seems especially timely and valid.

The second published study (by Pereira Gonçalves et al.) investigates associations between social isolation and indicators of general mental health, well-being, depression, anxiety, loneliness, and stress in Brazilian adults. The damage to mental health associated with social isolation during the pandemic can be minimized by maintaining satisfactory interpersonal relationships. The authors therefore propose direct recommendations to minimize the aforementioned isolation effects.

The next case report (by Michałowska S) is to present the psychosocial context of the decision to perform prophylactic breast and ovarian removal surgery and the consequences of the indicated procedures on the example of a patient with the BRCA1 genetic mutation, to adapt educational activities and support for patients. This is continuation of Michałowska’s previous scientific investigations [1].

In the next paper, Halicka et al. touches upon very serious and current problems of suicidal behaviours. Non-suicidal self-injuries (NSSI) and suicidal behaviours (SB) are common causes of se-

rious medical problems leading to hospitalization or death in adolescents and young adults. Nearly one million people worldwide die from suicide each year. One of psychological factors influencing the engagement in NSSI and SB is emotional intelligence, which is defined as collection of social skills. The authors aimed to review the neurobiological background of emotional intelligence and self-harm and discuss the current state of knowledge on their relationship. The results are interesting also in the context of previous studies on SI [2-4].

The following paper (by Nalewajska et al.) presents another hot topic in psychiatry: the gut microbiota. Microbiota consists of multiple microorganisms including bacteria, viruses and fungi and is referred to as the largest organ of the human body. Alteration in gut microbiota has been linked to occurrence of various neuropsychiatric disorders, ie. autism, schizophrenia and depression. The authors summarize literature regarding the gut-brain axis, its functioning and its role in the pathogenesis of selected neuropsychiatric illnesses as well as possible therapeutic approaches.

Next, Sangeeta Umesh Nayak shares a perspective on oral medicine, concluding that subjects with psychiatric illnesses exhibit poor oral health. Dental examination should therefore be incorporated as part of general physical examination. This group of patients who after all constitute a major part of the population should be attended with utmost care. The role of oral health was indicated in many studies, inter alia [5, 6].

The following article by Ilker Ozsahin et al. shows how the multi-criteria decision-making approach can be applied for selecting the most appropriate schizophrenia treatment. The authors propose the use of the fuzzy Preference Ranking Organization Method for Enrichment of Evaluations (PROMETHEE) technique for evaluating and comparing schizophrenia treatment techniques.

In the next paper, Shanaya Shah et al. describe the issue of sexual health and its central role in holistic approach to health care in India – a host of a multitude of social beliefs and cultural traditions, highlighting that health professionals are uncomfortable raising sexual issues partly because of their conservative sexual attitude.

Finally, Sahel Khakpoor et al. present their double-blind randomized clinical trial: investigating the mediational role of intolerance of uncertainty and its components in reducing symptoms of emotional disorders so common in the present times.

To sum up:

On behalf of all staff of Archives of Psychiatry and Psychotherapy, we hope the COVID-19 pandemic – one of the most important crises of the 21st century – can be overcome with minimal loss for the world population and healthcare workers. Stay safe and healthy, and have a great read.

**On behalf of the Editorial Committee,
Jerzy Samochowiec
Katarzyna Cyranka**

REFERENCES

1. Michałkowska S. How to support patients with BRCA genetic mutation? Research review. Archives of Psychiatry and Psychotherapy, 2019; 4: 16–26.
2. Raghavendra S, Kala Ch, Laila M. Suicide ideation and stresses among the working professionals in India. Archives of Psychiatry and Psychotherapy, 2018; 3: 63–70.
3. Halicka J, Kiejna A. Differences between suicide and non-suicidal self-harm behaviours: a literary review. Archives of Psychiatry and Psychotherapy, 2015; 3: 59–63. Psychiatr. Pol. 2015; 49(6): 1343–1357
4. Sobański JA, Cyranka K, Rodziński P, Klasa K, Rutkowski K, Dembińska E, Mielimąka M, Müldner-Nieckowski Ł, Smiatek-Mazgaj B. Are neurotic personality traits and neurotic symptoms intensity associated with suicidal thoughts reported by patients of a day hospital for neurotic disorders? Psychiatry Pol. 2015;49(6):1343-1358
5. Biegańska-Banaś JM, Gierowski JK, Pihut M, Ferendiuk E. Oral health-related quality of life and cognitive functioning in myofascial temporomandibular disorders pain. Archives of Psychiatry and Psychotherapy, 2019; 1: 45–58.
6. Szupiany T, Pytko-Polończyk J, Rutkowski K. Dental needs of psychiatric patient with eating disorders. Psychiatr. Pol. 2015; 49(5): 945–954.