

## Physician`s knowledge, attitudes and practices regarding the management of major cognitive disorders in the Republic of Moldova

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### Abstract

**Background:** The number of people living with dementia worldwide is increasing exponentially. It is estimated to be doubled by 2030 and tripled by 2050. The management of cognitive disorders is a developing field in the Republic of Moldova. The aim of the study was the analysis of knowledge, attitudes and practices of physicians regarding patients with major cognitive impairment.

**Material and methods:** An online survey that included 24 questions about physicians' knowledge, attitudes and practices in the diagnosis, treatment and barriers to health care of these patients was spread through social media.

**Results:** 122 doctors (82.8% of females and 17.2% of males) completed the survey; 45.9% of the respondents are licensed neurologists, 25.4% psychiatrists, 13.1% family doctors, 9% psychologists, 5.6% other specialties. In their activity 36% of the respondents consult (daily) patients with cognitive disorders, and 63.9% – weekly. 54.1% of the participants mentioned the lack of social support for patients and families, 47.5% – difficulty in referring to other specialists, 45.9% – communication with patients, 36.1% had difficulties in diagnosis, 30.3% – communication with relatives, 29.5% – diagnosis and treatment of comorbidities, 28.7% – planning treatment. During the consultation 70.5% of doctors measure cognitive decline with dedicated tools and 55.7% knew a national or international guideline for dementia management. 38.5% of the participants mentioned that dementia patients are time and resource consuming and difficult to manage.

**Conclusions:** The study revealed that physicians are insufficiently prepared to manage dementia patients in the Republic of Moldova. The insufficient knowledge, the lack of diagnostic skills, deficient communication, inadequate plan management and personal negative attitude to such patients are the major pitfalls depicted.

**Key words:** cognitive disorders, dementia, KAP study.

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## Medication overuse in patients with headache during the COVID-19 pandemic

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### Abstract

**Background:** Medication overuse in patients with headache is the most important risk factor for secondary headache. According to ICHD criteria, the use of analgesics or triptans for more than 10 days / month and combined analgesics > 15 days / month, for more than 3 months is considered medication overuse. The aim of the study was to analyze the use of analgesics in patients with headache in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and to establish the presence of medication overuse.

**Material and methods:** An online survey, launched through social media channels, was completed by the patients with headache and COVID-19 disease. Validated questionnaire gathered data on: demographics, COVID infection, the characteristics of headache before, during and after COVID-19 infection, abortive headache medication, behavior, sleep disorders, anxiety and depression.

**Results:** The study included 131 participants: 14 men (10.6%) and 117 women (89.31%), mean age –  $37 \pm 8.16$  years. Before COVID-19 infection participants used analgesic drugs  $3.67 \pm 2.96$  days / month, during the COVID-19 infection month –  $10.44 \pm 8.81$  days / month, and in the post-COVID period –  $12.27 \pm 9.73$  days / month. From the study group 9.1% of patients had medication overuse before COVID-19, during the Covid-19 period – 43% and after the COVID-19 – 33%.

**Conclusions:** The study proved increased analgesics consumption during and after the COVID-19 infection, possibly due to the association of a secondary headache, namely headache attributed to infection. Other factors will be elucidated in further research.

**Key words:** headache, COVID-19 infection, medication overuse.

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