

Sleep disturbances in trauma-affected refugees

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ABSTRACT

Background and aim: Sleep disturbances are often referred to as the hallmark of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Based on self-ratings by trauma-affected refugees treated at Competence Centre for Transcultural Psychiatry (CTP) 99% reported some degree of sleep disturbances and some degree of recurrent nightmares. Sleep disturbances can affect the efficacy of first-line PTSD treatment and constitute a risk factor for poor outcome of psychiatric treatment. Nevertheless research on the treatment of sleep disturbances in trauma-affected refugees is very scarce. The aim of this study is to examine the effect of treatment of sleep disturbances in trauma-affected refugees with PTSD.

Materials and Method: The study will include 230 refugees, diagnosed with PTSD, referred to CTP. Patients who give informed consent will be randomised into four treatment groups: Treatment as usual (TAU); pharmacological treatment according to algorithm and manual based Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, TAU and add-on treatment with mianserin, TAU and add-on treatment with Imagery Rehearsal Therapy (IRT), TAU and add-on treatment with mianserin and IRT. Trial endpoints are sleep, nightmare, PTSD and depression symptoms, all measured on validated ratings scales.

Results: The study is planned to begin inclusion of patients during 2016. Results are not available.

Conclusion: During the presentation the underlying principles behind the randomised study, the hypotheses and the methods will be discussed.

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