

Marontology: Comorbidities of Homeless People Living with Schizophrenia

Marontologia: Comorbilidade de Pessoas em Situação de Sem Abrigo a Viver com Esquizofrenia

Keywords: Comorbidity; Homeless; Portugal; Psychosis; Schizophrenia

Palavras-chave: Comorbidade; Esquizofrenia; Pessoas em Situação de Rua; Portugal; Psicose

Dear Editor, we read with interest a recent article in your journal where the authors concluded that although Portugal evolved favorably in terms of equity in healthcare usage, several challenges remain.¹ One of these challenges is the healthcare usage by homeless people.² Homeless people should be brought to the attention of Marontology, a new medical specialty, suggested after the Greek word *marontos*, which means unwanted.³

Portugal's homeless population is estimated to be 3396,

with almost half (1358) living in Lisbon.⁴ Since knowing the prevalence of psychiatric disorders (including alcohol and drug abuse) in homeless people in Portugal is estimated to be 90%,⁵ we estimate that there are around 1222 mental patients living in the streets of Lisbon.

We recently reviewed the clinical records of 200 schizophrenic patients in our institution and found 50 homeless patients. This small sample could represent about 4% of all potential homeless people living with mental illness in Lisbon's streets. All these 50 patients of ours have been diagnosed with primary or secondary schizophrenia (e.g. 78% with true, idiopathic schizophrenia and 22% with organic or symptomatic schizophrenia-like psychosis). But besides the neuropsychiatric diagnoses we were able to ascertain the most important comorbidities among these patients, which are summarized in Table 1.

We hope this preliminary data will raise interest among colleagues from other specialties so that they can join us in this never-ending quest: Marontology.

Table 1 – Top five comorbidities in our 50 homeless patients living with psychosis

Diagnosis (ICD 10 code)	Prevalence (%)
Mental and behavioral disorders due to multiple drug use (F19)	76%
Disorders of lipoprotein metabolism and other lipidemias (E78)	30%
Chronic viral hepatitis (B18)	28%
Unspecified diabetes mellitus (E14)	20%
Obesity (E66)	18%

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Recebido: 07 de fevereiro de 2020 - Aceite: 10 de fevereiro de 2020 | Copyright © Ordem dos Médicos 2020

<https://doi.org/10.20344/amp.13561>

