

## PSYCHIATRIC COUNSELLING IN NOVARA GENERAL HOSPITAL WARDS: SIX YEARS OF ACTIVITY (2006-2011)

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**Background:** Liaison Psychiatry facilitates the management of medical-psychiatric comorbidities.

**Objective:** To describe the activity of the Liaison Service, *Maggiore della Carità* General Hospital, Novara, Italy, from February 2006 to December 2011.

**Aims:** To evaluate the referral rate among different wards.

**Method:** Patients referred for psychiatric consultation were analysed by means of a logistic regression model.

**Results:** 1794 patients overall were involved. The referral rate was 1,60%, with a decrease in 2011. The highest frequency was in Radiotherapy and Hematology (14.71%). Reasons for consulting were: management problems (38%), assessment of a positive psychiatric history (37%), depression (32%), differential diagnosis between organic and psychiatric diseases (19%). Interventions for differential diagnosis and management problems significantly increased in 2010 and 2011 respectively. Radiotherapy and Haematology Wards were characterised by a higher referral rate for psychiatric history or depression (53%; 55%), Surgery showed fewer requests for depression (20%). The consultant suggested interviews or drug administration to 91% and 69% of patients respectively; interventions on the hospital staff and on the family in 34% and in 16% of cases. We observed an increase in interventions on hospital staff (49%) since 2006 and the use of interviews increased (96%) since 2010. Radiotherapy and Hematology were characterized by a greater use of interviews (95%), interventions on staff (43%) and family members (22%).

**Conclusions:** The referral rate is consistent with literature. Differences among Wards as far as the use of liaison psychiatry is concerned are discussed.