

THE MAGNITUDE OF THE PROBLEM - WHAT PRICE IS SOCIETY PAYING FOR UNDER DIAGNOSIS AND SUB OPTIMAL TREATMENT OF DEPRESSION

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Epidemiological surveys and treatment studies have clearly established that both detection and treatment rates in depression and in anxiety disorders revolve only around 50%. This figure appears to be stable, over a number of decades, despite significant educational and policy efforts to change this pattern. Since depression is a leading cause of disability, lost productivity and health care expenditure, the societal and individual cost of this impasse is tremendous. This talk will review this data and discuss how even small changes in our therapeutic abilities may translate into major advances for patients and their environment. Meeting mental health care needs of individuals, who currently have a low rate of depression treatment, will pose an important challenge to general medical and mental health educators and practitioners. Epidemiological surveys and treatment studies have clearly established that both detection and treatment rates in depression and in anxiety disorders revolve only around 50%. This figure appears to be stable, over a number of decades, despite significant educational and policy efforts to change this pattern. Since depression is a leading cause of disability, lost productivity and health care expenditure, the societal and individual cost of this impasse is tremendous. This talk will review this data and discuss how even small changes in our therapeutic abilities may translate into major advances for patients and their environment. Meeting mental health care needs of individuals, who currently have a low rate of depression treatment, will pose an important challenge to general medical and mental health educators and practitioners.