ASSESSMENT OF THE OCCURRENCE AND INTENSITY OF CHRONIC PAIN IN HOSPITALIZED PATIENTS IN CONSERVATIVE DEPARTMENTS

Chronic pain is a serious medical, social and economic problem. It has a negative impact on the quality and life expectancy of patients. This fact demonstrates the continuing efforts to tackle this important health problem and the need for better pain management with effective strategies.

Chronic pain affects people of all ages. It is a subjective feeling. The experience of pain is only seemingly common to all people, in fact we all feel pain differently. Due to the complexity of the pathophysiology and the subjectivity of chronic pain, it is difficult to clearly define, and its treatment requires multidisciplinary management. Therefore, pain remains of interest to, and even beyond, many fields of medicine.

The multidimensional approach to pain gives the benefits of assessing different areas of life by distinguishing the diversity of individual variables. It also uses information related to the chronic pain experienced and behavior and health assessment. Detailed identification of individual aspects of quality of life is determined by demographic and social factors, which are identified at the level of an individual patient, with an indication of the area requiring specific interventions.

In this context, the aim of the study was to assess the occurrence and intensity of chronic pain in patients hospitalized in conservative departments. Two hypotheses in the form of statements were put forward in the study. The first one says that "Chronic pain is a common symptom in hospitalized patients" while the second says: "Treatment of chronic pain is insufficient". The process of hypothesis verification is preceded by the analysis of the collected research material, which is carried out using the general-to-specific method. This has a significant impact on the shape of both the entire work and its individual chapters.

The study group consisted of 300 patients hospitalized in clinics and hospital wards. The study group consisted of 3 subgroups with the same number of participants. The method of diagnostic survey and standardized research tools as well as the proprietary questionnaire were used to collect the data.

The conducted analysis of the research revealed that chronic pain occurred in all surveyed respondents during their hospitalization. On days 1, 5 and 10 of hospital stay, the perceived pain intensity according to the numerical NRS scale was 7, 6 and 5 points, respectively.

The conducted analysis also showed that depression and anxiety as well as irritability are common mood disorders observed in patients with the pain component. The severe level of

anxiety was present in 21.3% of the entire study group and was strongly diversified in relation to the individual subgroups of patients. As many as 77% of the entire group are patients with COPD and asthma. In addition, research has shown that 57% of respondents suffer from depression. 9.3% of the study group was diagnosed with severe depression. In order to fully understand the perspective of a patient with chronic pain, an assessment of annoyance among subjects was also performed.

The analysis revealed that a high level of irritation - above 3 points - was found in 46.6% of patients. The occurrence of sleep disorders was also analyzed - they occurred in 49.3% (148 patients) of the entire study group.

The analysis of the results and their comparison with reports from the literature allowed for the following conclusions:

- Chronic pain is a common symptom in hospitalized patients, it has occurred in all surveyed respondents during their hospitalization.
- There is a relationship between the intensity of chronic pain experienced and the level of quality of life as well as the individual components, before and after treatment, in all subgroups.
- The intensity of pain causes the deterioration of the mental state and vice versa, the worse mental state is, the more severe pain symptoms are.
- In the entire study group of patients, 57% suffered from depression. In contrast, 9.3% of the study group was diagnosed with severe depression. In particular, these are patients with COPD and asthma.
- Sleep disturbances occurred in 49.3% of the entire study group.

On the basis of the results obtained in the discussion, it was found that chronic pain, unlike acute pain, loses its warning function, which makes it a disease in itself, as it changes all areas of human life. Moreover, it prevents the continuation of professional work and the realization of one's own passions in life.