

SAND abstract No. 145 from the BEACH program 2009–10

Subject: Schizophrenia and bipolar disorder management and visit frequency

Organisation supporting this study: Janssen-Cilag Pty Ltd

Issues: The proportion of general practice patients with a history of schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, schizophreniform, paranoid psychosis or bipolar disorder; whether the condition was managed under a specific plan or program; the number of visits to a GP in the previous 3 months (including the current consultation); the number of visits at which schizophrenia/bipolar disorder was managed; current medications used to manage the condition and who initiated the medication use (GP or specialist).

Sample: 2,564 patients from 89 GPs; data collection period: 31/03/2009 – 04/05/2009.

Method: Detailed in the paper entitled *SAND method 2009–10* at: www.fmrc.org.au/publications/SAND_abstracts.htm.

Summary of results

The age and sex distribution of respondents did not differ from that of patients at all 2007–08 BEACH encounters.

Of the 2,564 respondents, 74 (2.9%, 95% CI: 2.0–3.7) had a history of either schizophrenia-related problems or bipolar disorder. Of these patients, 32 (1.3%, 95% CI: 0.7–1.8) had schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, schizophreniform or paranoid psychosis, and 43 (1.7%, 95% CI: 1.1–2.3) had bipolar disorder.

The majority of schizophrenia-related problems (87.5%) and bipolar problems (83.7%) were in patients aged 25–64 years. There was no significant difference between males and females in the proportion who had either of the conditions.

Of 28 respondents with schizophrenia-related problems, 13 were managed as part of a shared care program with a community mental health centre, and 8 patients were part of a management plan with a private psychiatrist. Of 28 respondents, the median number of GP visits in the previous 3 months was four, at which schizophrenia-related problems were managed twice. Of the 32 patients with schizophrenia-related problems 40.6% ($n=13$) were on one medication, 37.5% ($n=12$) were on two, and 12.5% ($n=4$) of patients were taking no medication. Quetiapine and risperidone were most commonly recorded, and together accounted for more than one-third of the medications. There were 45 medications with known initiator: 10 (22.2%) were initiated by a GP, and 35 (77.8%) by a specialist.

Of 42 respondents with bipolar disorder, 13 were part of a shared care program with a community mental health centre and 17 were being managed as part of a management plan with a private psychiatrist. For the 43 bipolar patients, the median number of visits to a GP in the previous 3 months was 3, at which bipolar disorder was managed once. Of the 43 patients, 34.9% were on one medication, 30.2% were on two, 16.3% were on three, 7.0% were on four, and 11.6% of bipolar patients were taking no medication. Sodium valproate, quetiapine and olanzapine were most commonly recorded, and together accounted for about 36% of the medications. For the 71 medications with known initiator, 28 (39.4%) were initiated by a GP and 43 (60.6%) by a specialist.

Correspondence to: Christopher Harrison, AGPSCC

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

The shaded section of the following forms asks questions about **SCHIZOPHRENIA and BIPOLAR DISORDER**.
 You may tear out this page as a guide to completing the following section of forms.

INSTRUCTIONS

Please answer the following questions for **ALL** of the **next 30 PATIENTS** in the order in which the patients are seen.

Please **DO NOT** select patients to suit the topic being investigated.

Schizophrenia / Bipolar disorders

Please use the tick boxes to advise whether this patient has a history of any of the listed **schizophrenia / bipolar disorder** conditions.

If the patient does not have a history of any of these conditions **please end the questions here.**

Frequency of management

Please write in the spaces provided the approximate **number of times** the patient has visited a GP for any reason in the past 3 months. Use patient recall, your notes or knowledge, to give the best estimate. Please also write the approximate number of GP visits at which their **schizophrenia / bipolar disorder** was **managed** during that time. (Please include **today's** consultation in the total.) If you **do not know** the number for either, please tick the box labelled 'don't know'.

Changes to medication

Please advise whether the patient's medication for either condition **will change as a result of today's visit**.

If a medication is to be **stopped** please **circle a number** to indicate which medication(s) (from those listed in the previous question) will cease.

Change in dose refers to an increase or decrease in medication dose

Adding a medication is the commencement of a medication the patient was not previously taking.

Tick as many as apply.

Management plan

If the patient has a history of any of the previously listed **schizophrenia / bipolar conditions**, please advise whether their condition is **being managed** via any of the methods below.

(CMHC = Community Mental Health Centre)

Current medications

Please write the **name of the medication(s)** currently taken by the patient (i.e. prior to today's visit) for the management of schizophrenia or bipolar disorder.

Please also indicate:

- the **duration** the patient has used each medication (in months)
- whether the medication was **initiated** by a GP or specialist.

Reasons for changes

Please use the tick boxes to advise the reason(s) for altering the patient's **medication(s)** at today's encounter.

<p>Does this patient have a history of:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Schizophrenia <input type="checkbox"/> Schizoaffective disorder / Schizophreniform / paranoid psychosis <input type="checkbox"/> Bipolar disorder manic <input type="checkbox"/> Bipolar disorder depressive <input type="checkbox"/> Bipolar disorder mixed <input type="checkbox"/> None of the above → End questions	<p>Is the patient managed as part of:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Shared care program with CMHC <input type="checkbox"/> Management plan with private psychiatrist <input type="checkbox"/> Discharge plan from hospital <input type="checkbox"/> Discharge plan from CMHC <input type="checkbox"/> Community / involuntary treatment order <input type="checkbox"/> None of the above <p style="text-align: right;">BL111B</p>	<p>Approx. how many times has this patient visited a GP in the past 3 months?</p> <p>No. ____ <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>At approx. how many of these was the schizophrenia/ bipolar disorder managed?</p> <p>No. ____ <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p>	<p>Medication(s) taken for schizophrenia / bipolar: (prior to this visit)</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Medication name</th> <th>Duration of use</th> <th>Initiated by (please circle)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1. _____</td> <td>_____ mths</td> <td>GP / Spec'st</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. _____</td> <td>_____ mths</td> <td>GP / Spec'st</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. _____</td> <td>_____ mths</td> <td>GP / Spec'st</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4. _____</td> <td>_____ mths</td> <td>GP / Spec'st</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Medication name	Duration of use	Initiated by (please circle)	1. _____	_____ mths	GP / Spec'st	2. _____	_____ mths	GP / Spec'st	3. _____	_____ mths	GP / Spec'st	4. _____	_____ mths	GP / Spec'st	<p>At today's visit did you: (tick all that apply)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Stop med(s) ← 1 2 3 4 (circle the related number)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Add new med(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Change dose(s) of current med(s) <input type="checkbox"/> No change</p>	<p>If you made any med changes today what were the reason(s)?</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Improved efficacy <input type="checkbox"/> Reduce side effects <input type="checkbox"/> Improved safety <input type="checkbox"/> Ease of regimen <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ (please specify)
Medication name	Duration of use	Initiated by (please circle)																		
1. _____	_____ mths	GP / Spec'st																		
2. _____	_____ mths	GP / Spec'st																		
3. _____	_____ mths	GP / Spec'st																		
4. _____	_____ mths	GP / Spec'st																		