SAND abstract No. 142 from the BEACH program 2008–09

Subject: Depression and antidepressant use in general practice patients

Organisation supporting this study: Wyeth Australia Pty Ltd

Issues: Prevalence of current diagnosed depression in the patient sample; presence of listed comorbidities (anxiety, insomnia, back complaint, hypertension, lipid disorder, diabetes, asthma, ischaemic heart disease, gastro-oesophageal reflux disease, arthritis, cancer, other) in patients with depression (multiple response allowed); their current use of antidepressants; medication side effects thought (GP clinical opinion) due to the antidepressant medication(s).

Sample: 2,963 patients from 101 GPs; data collection period: 24/02/2009—30/03/2009.


Summary of results

The sex distribution of surveyed patients was similar to that of patients at all BEACH encounters 2007–08, 41.6% being male. However, this sample was significantly older than patients at all encounters, with fewer patients aged less than 45 years, and a greater proportion aged 65 years and over.

The prevalence of diagnosed depression among the 2,963 patients was 15.1%, (95% CI: 13.3–16.3), and did not significantly differ in males (13.2%) and females (16.5%). It was most prevalent among 25–44 year old patients (20.9%) and those aged 45–64 years (20.7%).

Prevalence then decreased significantly to 10.7% among those aged 75 years and over.

Of the 446 patients with depression, 90.1% (n = 402) had at least one comorbidity and 64.8% had two or more. Most common among these 402 patients were anxiety (51.8%), insomnia (32.1%), hypertension (29.3%), back complaint (24.0%), and lipid disorder (18.6%).

Of the 446 patients with diagnosed depression, 430 (96.4%) responded to the antidepressant question. Of these, 329 (76.5%) were taking antidepressants and 306 gave details of 323 antidepressants being taken. More than half (54.5%) of these were selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) (sertraline (15.5%), escitalopram (11.5%), and citalopram (10.2%) being the most common; 13.6% were non-selective monoamine reuptake inhibitors; 1.9% were monoamine oxidase A inhibitors; 30.0% were ‘other antidepressants’ (venlafaxine being most common). Of the 303 patients with depression for whom side effects were reported, 26.7% (n = 81) had 112 side effects (average 1.4 per patient), the most common being sedation (7.9% of those on antidepressants), weight gain (7.3%), and sexual dysfunction (6.6%).

Of the 329 patients taking antidepressant(s) for depression, 306 (93.0%) had comorbidity(ies), 68.4% having two or more, prevalence of each common comorbidity being similar to the total sample of patients with depression. Other prescribed medications were reported for 302 patients taking an antidepressant for depression, 964 being detailed (average 3.2 per patient).

Of 284 patients with depression for whom all data were complete, only one of 54 patients not taking other prescribed medication(s) reported a side effect and 26.5% of those on additional medications reported side effect(s) of antidepressant(s).

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AIHW Australian GP Statistics and Classification Centre, 2009. SAND abstract No. 142 from the BEACH program: Depression and antidepressant use in general practice patients. Sydney: AGPSCC University of Sydney. ISSN 1444-9072
**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.

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**Depression**

Please indicate whether this patient **currently** has diagnosed depression.

If this patient does not have diagnosed depression please **end the questions here** for this patient.

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**Antidepressant medication**

Please indicate whether this patient is **currently** taking an antidepressant medication.

If YES, please specify the name of the antidepressant medication.

If NO, please **end the questions here** for this patient.

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**Comorbidities**

Please use the tick boxes to advise whether this patient has any of the listed comorbidities.

If the patient has a chronic condition that is not listed please specify it in the space provided.

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**Side effects of anti-depressant medication**

Please use the tick boxes to advise whether this patient is **currently** experiencing side effects that you believe, in your clinical opinion, are due to their antidepressant medication.

If this patient is not experiencing any side effects please tick the box labelled ‘no side effects’.

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**Other prescribed medications**

Please specify all other prescribed medications currently taken regularly by this patient for any condition.

Please write the name of each medication.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does this patient currently have diagnosed depression?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Yes</td>
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**Other diagnosed medical conditions:**

- Anxiety (Tick all that apply)
- Ischaemic heart disease
- GORD
- Insomnia
- Arthritis
- Back complaint
- Cancer
- Hypertension
- Lipid disorders
- Other chronic problems:
- Diabetes
- Asthma (please specify)

**Currently taking antidepressant medication?**

- □ Yes (please specify)  

**Side effects that in your clinical opinion are due to current antidepressant med:**

- □ Sedation
- □ Sexual dysfunction
- □ Other: (please specify)
- □ Sleep disturbance
- □ Weight gain
- □ Agitation
- □ Anxiety
- □ No side effects

**Other prescribed medications taken by this patient:** (please specify medication name)

- □ Nausea
- □ Other: (please specify)

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