

## Integrated Treatment by Biopsychosocial Approach in Patients with Conversion Disorder

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**Introduction.** The number of patients with conversion disorder, employees of working age who experience psychogenic nonepileptic seizure (PNES) events and anxiety caused by psychologically mediated episodes at work is currently growing. Integrated treatment (IT) by biopsychosocial approach for such individuals includes cognitive behavioural therapy, anxiolytic medication (AM), and team learning (TL) with improvement of workplace relations and organizational culture [Brown et al., 2013; Goldstein et al., 2010; Vitols et al., 2005].

**Aim, Material and Methods.** The aim of the study was to investigate the benefits of the cognitive hypnotherapeutic treatment (CHT), AM and TL in the four-week IT course for patients with PNES. Electroencephalogram (EEG) test, a life quality assessment with Quality of Life Scale [QOLS; Burckhardt et al., 2003], stage of anxiety assessment with Self-esteem Scale [RSES; Rosenberg, 1965] was realised in patients before and after treatment course and during a 3-months follow-up. Patients were asked to keep a Seizure Events Diary (SED) during treatment course and follow-up.

**Results.** Over the past two-year period we studied a group of 10 patients (males = 4, females = 6), intellectual workers, aged 25 to 45 years, with well-documented PNES, suffering six months from PNES with anxiety, poor life quality, caused by psychosocial risk factors at work. Group A patients (males = 3, females = 3) were motivated and for four weeks received IT (CHT and TL once a week, anxiolytic Xanax XR – 0.5 mg tablet once a day). Group B patients (males = 2, females = 2) were motivated and for four weeks received only AM (Xanax XR – 0.5 mg tablet once a day). The 4-week treatment course resulted in significant reduction in seizure frequency with reporting no seizures by the final session of CHT, with improvement in self-rated psychosocial functioning both post-treatment and at three-month follow-up in four Group A patients (66.6% in males, 66.6% in females), and in one Group B patient (50% in female).

**Conclusions.** Integrated 4-week treatment course by use CHT, AM and TL for patients with conversion disorder suffering from PNES is an effective biopsychosocial approach. CHT and TL, brain activity monitoring by an EEG test and seizures self-monitoring by keeping SED, self-testing scales is a helping option for developing skills to manage intrapsychic conflict and anxiety caused by psychosocial risk factors at work.