

## Impact of Trauma Exposure: Post-traumatic Stress Disorder and Co-Morbidity

Angelina OM Chan\*

Trauma Recovery and Corporate Solutions, Changi General Hospital, Singapore

Health and economic effects associated with exposure to trauma such as extreme stressors, including war, sexual victimization, disasters, and serious accidents are extremely costly in terms of the impact upon victims and their families and upon society [1,2].

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is only one possible psychiatric condition that can arise in traumatized individuals. Psychiatric comorbidity is high in patients with PTSD. The National Comorbidity Survey data suggests that 16% have one coexisting psychiatric disorder, 17% have two psychiatric disorders, and 50% have three or more [3]. Depressive disorders, anxiety disorders, and substance abuse are two to four times more prevalent in patients with PTSD; substance abuse is often due to the patient's attempts to self-medicate symptoms.

Individuals with one or more PTSD symptoms are more likely to experience occupational problems, have poorer social supports, and have more disability than controls [4]. PTSD may increase the risk for attempted suicide [5,6]. Individuals with PTSD also have higher rates of problems in intimate relationships, including marital difficulties, compared to people without PTSD [4,7].

Individuals who experienced most of their trauma in childhood e.g. physical and sexual abuse often show greater difficulty with affect regulation e.g. unmodulated anger, and often demonstrate more dissociation, somatization, self-destructive behavior, and suicidal behaviour [8].

Hence the ability to identify at-risk trauma exposed individuals early, prevent or mitigate the development of psychiatric morbidity through early intervention and treatment is important.

This special issue on Posttraumatic Stress Disorders highlights important findings of screening and early intervention in road traffic accident victims and their families, understanding the impact of childhood trauma history and juvenile offending and the need for trauma-related psychiatric services, providing therapies such as Eye Movement Reprocessing and Desensitization (EMDR) and Hypnosis.

### References

1. Chan AO, Medicine M, Air TM, McFarlane AC (2003) Posttraumatic stress disorder and its impact on the economic and health costs of motor vehicle accidents in South Australia. *J Clin Psychiatry* 64: 175-181.
2. McCrone P, Knapp M, Cawkill P (2003) Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in the Armed Forces: health economic considerations. *J Trauma Stress* 16: 519-522.
3. Kessler RC, Sonnega A, Bromet E, Hughes M, Nelson CB (1995) Posttraumatic stress disorder in the National Comorbidity Survey. *Arch Gen Psychiatry* 52: 1048-1060.
4. Solomon SD, Davidson JR (1997) Trauma: prevalence, impairment, service use, and cost. *J Clin Psychiatry* 58 Suppl 9: 5-11.
5. Wilcox HC, Storr CL, Breslau N (2009) Posttraumatic stress disorder and suicide attempts in a community sample of urban American young adults. *Arch Gen Psychiatry* 66: 305-311.
6. Bernal M, Haro JM, Bernert S, Brugha T, de Graaf R, et al. (2007) Risk factors for suicidality in Europe: results from the ESEMED study. *J Affect Disord* 101: 27-34.
7. Taft CT, Watkins LE, Stafford J, Street AE, Monson CM (2011) Posttraumatic stress disorder and intimate relationship problems: a meta-analysis. *J Consult Clin Psychol* 79: 22-33.
8. van der Kolk BA, Pelcovitz D, Roth S, Mandel FS, McFarlane A, et al. (1996) Dissociation, somatization, and affect dysregulation: the complexity of adaptation of trauma. *Am J Psychiatry* 153: 83-93.

\*Corresponding author: Angelina OM Chan, Trauma Recovery & Corporate Solutions, Changi General Hospital, Singapore, Tel: +65 6850 4481; E-mail: [angelina\\_chan@cgh.com.sg](mailto:angelina_chan@cgh.com.sg)

Received January 03, 2014; Accepted May 28, 2014; Published May 30, 2014

Citation: Chan AOM (2014) Impact of Trauma Exposure: Post-traumatic Stress Disorder and Co-Morbidity. *J Trauma Treat* S4: 014. doi:10.4172/2167-1222.S4-014

Copyright: © 2014 Chan AOM. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.