

Clinical Features and Treatment of Late Life Personality Disorders: A Systematic Review

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Abstract

Background: Minimal research into the onset and management of personality disorders in later life impacts the quality of care in this patient population with limited understanding of symptom presentation.

Aims: To clearly establish the differentiation of personality disorder characteristics in later life compared to young adulthood, in addition to evaluating the efficacy of current managements; psychological therapy, pharmacological and psychosocial interventions.

Methods: Articles collated together for this systematic review were filtered from searches on Embase, CINAHL, PsycINFO, Ovid and PubMed/ MEDLINE databases. The search and selection procedures were completed by GdeM, OC and AB, who independently searched through reference sections of selected studies to expand upon collated lists of relevant articles.

Results: In total, 21 articles were compiled together and searched. From these, five duplicate articles were removed. Of the remaining 16 articles, each reference list was manually evaluated to include a further 35 studies to screen for eligibility against the inclusion criteria alongside the original 16 articles. From the total of 51 studies, the exclusion criteria ruled out 39 articles, which left a remaining twelve articles that were eligible for the systematic review.

Conclusions: The systematic review reflects the collective view that personality disorders in later life remains a subject of poor understanding, emphasising the important of clinicians having more adequate knowledge of this subject in Psychiatry. It has outlined the necessity of further study into late life personality disorders, and how these can help medical professionals develop more efficacious management plans with the aims to reduce the incidence of hospitalisation.

