

## Detection of Apathy in Older Persons in Nursing Home: Routine use of NPI (Neuro Psychiatric Inventory) Questionnaire and impact in care framework

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Apathy is increasingly recognised as a frequent behavioural problem in Older Persons with Dementia. It should be detected systematically. Overlap with depression has been widely described and might explain the large variation of prevalence related. Validated tool as NPI ( Neuro Psychiatric Inventory) scale could be used routinely.

We performed NPI in all of our 53 patients (mean age of 87 yo, 50 women) in nursing home. Forty one (77,35%) have Dementia. We used the recommended tool NPI assed by carers (NPI-ES), added with the Apathy Inventory scale. Apathy represented 30.19% (16/53) of all patients and 24.40% (10/41) of Dementia. Among those with Dementia and Apathy, 43.75 % (7/16) have associated depression. Only 3/7 were under antidepressant drugs and 25.00% (4/16) had anticholinesterase agents. One patient had associated Parkinson symptoms and treatment.

Associated factors have been determined with multivariate analysis. Overlap between apathy and depression has been discussed with physicians.

The most important findings were that the use of scale routinely was feasible and accurate. An audit confirmed the results.

The routine use of appropriate, validated, recommended and easy to use psychometric scales as NPI in Older Persons and has allowed a change of practice by programming more non pharmacologic (cognitive stimulation approaches, balneotherapy, stimulation games), by increasing an awareness among carers to detect alert symptoms, by making some differences with depression, by re-discussing the indication of pharmacologic agents and by proposing an re-organisation of care in Nursing Home. The non pharmacologic methods (multiple stimulation methods ) have to be preferred. From the results we would recommend the use of NPI in ambulatory practice and in nursing home in a routine geriatric assessment and also in a risk management plan to decrease iatrogeny.

**Keywords:** Apathy, NPI, Geriatric care, Older Persons, Dementia

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