

The biopsychosocial approach to chronic alcoholic liver disease

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Objective: This report applies the biopsychosocial model into understanding chronic ALD, the impact it has on health and patient experience.

Biology: Encompassing three stages; hepatic steatosis, alcoholic hepatitis and cirrhosis, chronic ALD is caused by heavy alcohol ingestion for 10-12 years. Gender, obesity, smoking and the PNPLA3 gene are risk factors associated with ALD. Due to its relatively asymptomatic manner, it is unclear as to how many people in England and the Northwest are currently living with this condition. However, hospitalised admissions numbers and mortality rates from 1979-2005 then again in 2014 increased for both Wales and England, measuring incidence.

Psychology: Chronic ALD is linked to depression and anxiety. Due to the scope, stress and repercussions chronic illnesses bring, Quality of life (QoL) diminishes as the duration of illness, is undetermined, limiting functionality and capacity to live well. This report analyses the efficacy of integrative outpatient treatment for chronic ALD.

Sociology: Socioeconomic indicators which include education, income, occupations reveal patterns for alcohol dependency and negative health outcomes as causes behind ALD. Functional impairment, family or financial burden and social stigma are

examples of major disruptive experiences associated with chronic ALD. Depending on the sociological factor, some individuals consider their condition to be a disruption while others, adapt to viewing their illness as a normal aspect of life, coping with it.

Conclusion: For future medical practice and personal growth, this report exemplifies the importance of integrating the biopsychosocial model when assessing patients, as additional or supporting psychosocial interventions may be required.

Biography

Sanjana Phlananthachai is currently completing her third year of medical school at the University of Central Lancashire, UK. Prior to university, she attended and completed her International Baccalaureate program at NIST International School of Thailand. Alongside attending a Biology Honors summer course at Northwestern University, USA, she has spent several summers shadowing and gaining experience from well known ophthalmologists, cardiologists, neurologists and gynecologists in Chicago. Upon graduation, she aims to move back to her home country, Bangkok, Thailand to complete her foundation studies, establish herself within the Thai medical community and contribute to society.