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ABSTRACT BOOK

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SUBOXONE EFFICACY IN TREATING DRUG ADDICTION: COMPARISON WITH METHADONE AND MONITORING OF PATIENTS IN THERAPY AT SERT OF MARSALA

F. Venturella^{1*}, E. Spada², M.C. Tumbarello²

¹*Biological, Chemical and Pharmaceutical Sciences and Technologies Department, University of Palermo, Palermo, Italy;* ²*Graduated in Pharmacy, University of Palermo, Palermo, Italy*

*E-mail: fabio.venturella@unipa.it

Drug dependence and abuse is a public health problem as revealed by reports of state police that account overdose-related deaths for 305 during 2015. Most of the dead were caused by heroin. Despite evidence that methadone maintenance treatment is effective, it remains a controversial therapy because of its indefinite provision of a dependence-producing medication. The aim of this work is to evaluate clinically the effectiveness of Suboxone in maintaining abstinence and preventing relapse. Suboxone consists of buprenorphine and naloxone in the 4:1 ratio. The former is a partial agonist on the μ receptor and its absorption is rapid, while Naloxone is an antagonist on the receptor κ and it is absorbed slowly. At SERT of Marsala 32 drug-addicted people were monitored. At the beginning of the monitoring, 23% of patients had already started Suboxone treatment, whereas the rest of the group was subjected to suboxone treatment for the first time. The monitoring activity included laboratory exams, questionnaires and weekly speeches. The evaluation were based on the patient's response to Suboxone, possible side effects and degree of patient satisfaction. Even if 15% of patients have interrupted the suboxone treatment, the success of the therapy over time has been satisfactory at the time of the last report. In particular, 82% of patients who have tried both treatments with methadone and suboxone find the latter more effective. Study findings suggest that Suboxone treatment improves the ability of patients to remain abstinent, having fewer side effects with respect to methadone and reducing the risk of relapse.