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Substance Use Disorder And Aggressive Behavior In A 25-Year-Old Male

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Abstract

This case study examines a 25-year-old male ('Mr. Z') presenting with substance use disorder, primarily involving alcohol, and a history of aggressive behavior. The report details his substance use patterns, associated behavioral issues, and the impact on his life. A provisional diagnosis of substance use disorder is made. The recommended treatment plan includes pharmacotherapy, inpatient admission, and therapy sessions. The case underscores the need for comprehensive treatment approaches for substance use disorders, addressing both the substance use and co-occurring behavioral problems.

Introduction

Substance use disorders are characterized by a pattern of compulsive substance seeking and use despite negative consequences. Alcohol, in particular, is a commonly abused substance, often leading to significant health and social problems. Comorbid behavioral issues, such as aggression, can further complicate the presentation and treatment of substance use disorders. This case study presents the assessment and proposed management of a 25-year-old male with a history of alcohol abuse and aggressive behavior.

Client History

Demographic Information

- Name: Mr. Z
- Age: 25 years old
- Sex: Male
- Occupation: Works in a Bank

Informant

Mother, Sister

Chief Complaints

- Substance abuse (alcohol)
- Frequent and large quantity of substance use
- Constant urge to drink
- Withdrawal symptoms (headaches, stomachaches, aggression, irritation)
- Job loss due to alcohol influence
- Binge drinking episodes
- Extreme aggression

Family History

Family history details were not provided.

History of Present Illness

Mr. Z has been consuming alcohol since the 9th grade, influenced by a family history of alcohol use. He initially started with beer and later transitioned to whisky, which led to liver problems. He experienced liver pain upon alcohol cessation and was hospitalized for two days due to continuous alcohol use. His alcohol consumption pattern involved cycles of two to three weeks of drinking followed by five to six months of abstinence, with subsequent relapses.

He has a history of aggressive behavior dating back to his school years, including frequent fights with peers and teachers. Family support often mitigated consequences for these behaviors. In recent weeks, his alcohol consumption increased, accompanied by heightened aggression, agitation, irritation, low appetite, and lethargy. He also reported auditory hallucinations (hearing insect or animal sounds) during this period.

A recent binge drinking episode led to job loss. He exhibited aggressive behavior towards family members while intoxicated, including an incident where he consumed two bottles of whisky in a single day. Since these recent binge episodes, he has reported increased aggression, stomach aches, low appetite, and lethargy.

His social circle has consistently encouraged his drinking, which is identified as a contributing factor. In the two weeks preceding the clinic visit, he experienced increased aggression, low mood, a stronger urge to drink, and sadness, prompting his family to seek treatment.

Personal History

Mr. Z has a history of aggressive behavior since childhood, with frequent fights with friends and classmates. He began drinking alcohol at the age of 16. He has been involved in three legal cases: hit and run, drink and drive, and assault. His academic performance has been above average. Premorbid personality details were not provided.

Mental Status Examination

- **General Appearance:** Well-kempt and tidy.
- **Attitude:** Initially reluctant and uncooperative due to involuntary admission but became more cooperative as the session progressed.
- **Eye Contact:** Initially poor, improved during the session.
- **Psychomotor Activity:** Within normal limits.
- **Speech:** Normal rate, volume, and tone.
- **Mood and Affect:** Low and irritable in recent weeks.
- **Thought:** Normal content, form, and stream.
- **Cognition:** Average cognitive function.

- **Judgment:** Intact.
- **Insight:** Grade two (some awareness of the problem but limited understanding of its severity).

Provisional Diagnosis

Substance Use Disorder (Alcohol)

Treatment

- Pharmacotherapy
- Inpatient admission
- Therapy sessions

Research Evidence

Substance use disorders require a multifaceted treatment approach. Pharmacotherapy can assist in managing withdrawal symptoms and reducing cravings. Inpatient treatment provides a structured environment for detoxification and initiation of therapy. Psychotherapy, such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), has been shown to be effective in addressing underlying issues, developing coping skills, and preventing relapse. Addressing comorbid aggression often requires integrated treatment strategies, potentially including anger management and family therapy.

Conclusion

This case study illustrates the complex presentation of substance use disorder with comorbid aggressive behavior. Effective management necessitates a comprehensive treatment plan that includes pharmacotherapy, inpatient care, and ongoing therapy to achieve sustained recovery and address associated behavioral issues. Further investigation into family history and premorbid personality would provide a more complete clinical picture.

References

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