

From the Editors

The current issue of *Psychiatria Polska* is full of interesting and important articles for clinicians. It opens with two parts of recommendations from a group of experts under the auspices of the Polish Psychiatric Association and the National Consultants in psychiatry and child and adolescent psychiatry on the diagnosis and treatment of bipolar disorder in children, adolescents and young adults. These texts should be a must-read as they address a challenging topic. As Bien et al. pointed out, in recent decades there has been a significant increase in interest in the issue of bipolar disorder in children and adolescents in the literature. Due to the suggested diagnostic differences between the paediatric and adult forms, it has even been proposed to create a separate subdivision for this age group. The misconception that bipolar disorder is rare in children and adolescents persists. However, recent years have seen a significant increase in the diagnosis of this condition in this population. In today's clinical practice, however, for most patients it still takes up to 10 years from the onset of symptoms to diagnosis and implementation of appropriate treatment, and approximately 80% of them are in the meantime treated for disorders co-occurring with mood disorders, such as adjustment disorders, anorexia nervosa or conduct disorders [1]. Moreover, treating young patients poses significant challenges. Pharmacotherapy is often used off-label, medications have limited reimbursement, and additional difficulties arise due to the different pharmacokinetics of medications in young patients. Recommendations created by the Polish Psychiatric Association (PPA) and National Consultants can provide physicians not only with reliable knowledge but also a sense of security.

These works do not exhaustively address issues related to the treatment of adolescent patients. The next article is devoted to therapy in a day hospital. Psychotherapy plays a dominant role there. Tomasz Prusiński discusses the therapeutic alliance. In another work, the same author analysed the therapeutic alliance as a nonspecific factor in treating various mental health disorders. Although it is emphasised that the effectiveness of psychotherapy is significantly influenced by the quality of the relationship between the therapist and the patient, there is little empirical material in Polish studies that precisely demonstrates the achieved effects [2].

As we enter the era of artificial intelligence (AI), there is increasing debate about whether it will be a breakthrough in medicine or a tool for dehumanisation. A. Kałwa et al. examined the use of AI in the treatment of children treated in an acute psychiatric ward. Polish scientists are conducting advanced projects and actively discussing the use of AI in psychiatric diagnosis and therapy. An example is the MENTALIO project, conducted in Krakow, which aims to develop a system to support therapeutic decisions, including diagnosis and level of care, based on AI algorithms. We await the results, hoping that the authors will be willing to publish them in our journal!

Although several years have passed since the pandemic, psychiatrists still encounter people experiencing anxiety symptoms or even PTSD due to hospitalisation and the life-threatening nature of COVID-19. Researchers describe new challenges related to “post-pandemic stress disorder”, manifested by prolonged stress, low mood and psychosocial problems – which, although not formally classified, resembles PTSD [3]. Hospitalisation of COVID-19 patients, which was generally associated with a more severe course of the disease, negatively impacts the patient’s mental health and well-being. Uncertain prognosis and treatment, as well as the specific nature of hospitalisation for SARS-CoV-2 infection, involving stays in isolated wards, with visitation bans and even limited contact with healthcare workers, introduced additional stress [4]. Bętkowska-Korpała et al. return to these issues, addressing both the severity of psychopathological symptoms and personality predispositions.

These articles do not exhaust the content of the issue you hold in your hands, but we hope they will encourage you to read it. We are also pleased to inform you that the Impact Factor of *Psychiatria Polska* has increased, now standing at 1.1.

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References

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