

Cross Cultural Newsletter

"Great Pretenders in Cultural Psychiatry: 2 Cases of Masked Eating Disorders Presenting in Other Forms: Chicken or Egg?"

Presenters: Dr Roger Mysliwiec and Kellie Lavender

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Dear members,

Happy New Year to you all! This is to briefly report back on the 27th February 2017 meeting. We had a very successful evening with approximately 50 of our members attended.

The topic for the evening was "**Great Pretenders in cultural psychiatry: 2 cases of masked eating disorders presenting in other forms : Chicken or EGG?**".

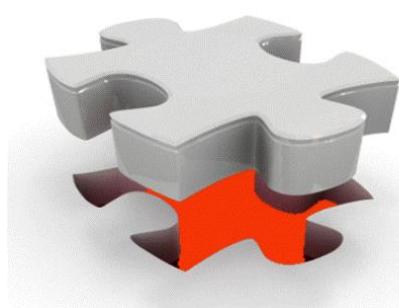


The discussants were **Dr Roger Mysliwiec** and **Ms Kellie Lavender** who are experts in treating eating disorders.



Due to confidentiality reasons, although the details of cases were altered to maintain privacy, it is not convenient to record the cases

here nor on the web. However, in brief, the discussants discussed two cases of eating problems occurring in extremes of life which initially presented as a metabolic syndrome with almost 50% of weight gain in a young person after antipsychotic treatment; and an elderly lady who, after a chronic illness, fails to thrive, mimicking A/N with a BMI of 14. These presentations often misdirected the attention of the clinician to the cause of the problem ie antipsychotic medication use and the chronic illness. However, analysing the history, the discussants discover that there are tell-tale signs in the history suggesting vulnerabilities including biological, personality (obsessive compulsive), social and prodromal signs indicative of eating problems. Cultural attitudes to and endorsement of restrictive eating, and obesity could likely have normalised earlier signs. Side effects of antipsychotic medication, and the need to regain health after the chronic illness could have triggered off eating problems in the form of uncontrollable overeating in the young girl and excessive restrictive eating in the old lady.



As to diagnosis, the presenters would suggest an additional diagnosis of unspecified eating disorder. However, to truly represent the condition, diagnosis alone would not suffice. A bio-psycho-social-cultural formulation would better serve these cases.

As to treatment, the presenters suggest that apart from treating the condition eg in the case of the girl, a combined strategy including changing medication, dealing with the metabolic

syndrome, and a behavioural approach that is acceptable to the culture would be relevant. Awareness of what could get in the way such as family's attitude and resistance is also important. As in the second case, the history of a strong obsessional and resistant personality would warrant the use medication such as olanzapine to take the edge of the fear about loss of control and the use of a supportive nurse might be helpful.

The evening ended with much discussion including those who watch over the internet broadcast.



It is a consensus that in the future case presentations might help the audience more to think through cases than just listening to the presentations alone.

Please note: There is no recording for this meeting due to the need to preserve the confidentiality of the cases.

Next Presentation: will be notified at a later date.

Thank you again for your support and looking forward to seeing you at our next meeting.

Sai Wong

for Cross Cultural Interest Group

