

Poster

2025年9月26日(金) 16:00 ~ 17:10 Poster Session (Foyer 1)

Poster 12

[P-12-04] Herbalism and Irish Folk Medicine as strategies to cope with mental health issues in Ireland: an ethnographic study by a foreigner psychiatrist

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Mental healthcare in Ireland still faces stigma, partly due to historical traumas like colonization and the Irish Famine. As a result, some people turn to Irish Vernacular Medicine (IVM) and herbal medicine, often led by traditional healers. The IVM, known as "a cure," has survived through generations. In 2023, as a Brazilian psychiatrist, I conducted an ethnographic study in Ireland, observing three traditional healers and two medical herbalists. I interviewed 39 patients after their consultations, taking notes on their complaints, the professionals' approaches, and the patients' motivations. Patients seeking these treatments valued herbal medicine for mental health issues and sought community support. They felt the herbal remedies were effective, regardless of whether the justification was scientific or traditional. Many had previously tried conventional psychiatric care but were dissatisfied, often due to a poor rapport with their doctors. All the professionals I observed demonstrated strong ethical conduct. They would refer patients back to a doctor or suggest shared care with a psychiatrist, especially for severe conditions like psychosis. As a culturally sensitive approach, IVM and Irish herbalism should be integrated into mental health treatment plans for patients who seek community support and a blend of modern medicine and traditional knowledge. This integration could help overcome resistance to psychiatric care and restore patients' faith in the medical system. This study protocol was approved by the Ethics Committee of Hospital das Clínicas da Faculdade de Medicina da Universidade de São Paulo (CAAE: 5097805.5.0000.0065; Opinion Number: 5.097.805).