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Eyes on EDOR at EPA's Vienna convention

Emotra's method for assessing suicide risk, EDOR, was presented at a special seminar in connection with a workshop, as well as in a poster display, at the international psychiatry convention in Vienna on March 28-31, 2015. Professor Marco Sarchiapone acted as the seminar moderator, while EDOR's inventor, Dr Lars-Håkan Thorell, presented the method, the research behind it and the ongoing multi-centre study. One of the direct results of this seminar was that both Thorell and Sarchiapone have been invited to present this new method at a number of national conventions in Europe later this year.

Emotra's CEO, Claes Holmberg, its Chief of Research, Lars-Håkan Thorell, and Professor Marco Sarchiapone participated in a number of activities at the Vienna convention. The special seminar on EDOR was carried out and was met with enthusiasm. Thorell's presentation evoked many questions and comments. Among other things, people wondered when the method would be available for regular use. Emotra was given the opportunity to answer questions about pricing, training and the ongoing clinical multi-centre study.

The difficulty in detecting which patients are at risk of committing suicide and how eager the psychiatric sector is to find a solution to this problem were glaringly apparent. Dr Vladimir Carli, a prominent researcher at Sweden's Karolinska Institute, commented on the abnormally high correlation between hyporeactivity and suicide risk that had been found in previous research and emphasised how important it is that the ongoing multi-centre study confirms these findings. Both he and other participants in the audience agreed on the significance if a large number of independent clinics could repeat the findings from previous studies with equivalently clear results. Both Lars-Håkan Thorell and Marco Sarchiapone later received invitations to address various national conventions across Europe.

The Company Emotra also enjoyed a good deal of attention for its stated strategy of achieving market establishment by collaborating with international organisations, research groups and psychiatric clinics. It was pointed out that Emotra is the first company to ever approach the area of suicide prevention research this way and it was seen as a positive aspect. This research area has been looking for a way to establish far-reaching collaborations with industrial partners, similar to the many existing collaborations between clinical research institutes and the pharmaceutical industry in other medical areas. Emotra has a good chance of filling this need.

The method was presented to an enthusiastic audience in a workshop and future business opportunities in the psychiatric field were also discussed. We also had a poster display about EDOR and our aims with the ongoing clinical multi-centre study.

Some researchers participating in our multi-centre study had their own poster display where they presented some sensationally positive results from a study of 60 patients in total, of which a few had been tested with EDOR. Of these, EDOR singled out two depressed patients with a high suicide risk (they were hyporeactive). These same two patients had been judged by the clinic's psychiatrists to be especially suicide-prone, since they had both previously made serious suicide attempts. This equals 100 percent sensitivity and a 100 percent "raw specificity" for fatal suicide attempts. In other words, results that are as in line with previously published

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research findings as we can achieve and which confirm EDOR's usefulness as an instrument for detecting depressed patients who are at risk of committing suicide. However, it is important to stress that this case concerns a partially retrospective study with a very small sample group. Another limitation in this study is the way in which EDOR is compared to a traditional diagnostic method. While EDOR is a quantitative, objective and reproducible method, traditional methods are subjective and normally not very reproducible. This aspect was not considered in the above study.

After our special evening meeting, held on the 29th of March with representatives from our clinical multi-centre study, we confirmed that all involved parties remain very optimistic about the concept. The technical issues we had last autumn, which made it nearly impossible to transfer test data, have not affected the clinics' willingness to see the study through to the end. Some clinics have, however, incurred some extra costs, which Emotra will be compensating them for. A publishing committee, PC, comprised of five people, Emotra's Chief of Research and CEO as well as three other prominent research leaders, has been formed. The PC will decide on the submission for publication of scientific articles based on our study results. The PC will also be responsible for establishing principles about public announcements and future investigations and studies which could be carried out and that are based on the scientific material we have gathered during our multi-centre study. A gathering of all of the study participants in the autumn of 2015 was discussed. The aim of such a gathering would be to meet and establish the PC's suggestions as well as enable the exchange of experiences between the clinics involved in the study.

So far, about 180 patients have been tested in our ongoing clinical multi-centre study, 150 of them in the last 5 weeks. The inflow of new tests is proceeding as planned. The March 29 work meeting confirmed our impression that the involved clinics are seriously committed to our cause, and the Company enjoys excellent relationships with the clinics. Despite the difficult technical problems we experienced during the autumn, which naturally caused the clinics a great deal of frustration, faith in EDOR and the Company's willingness to help the clinics resolve problems that arise remains strong. This positive attitude toward the method should, however, primarily be ascribed to the fact that there is a gaping demand for an objective and quantitative diagnostic method for assessing suicide risk. Everyone wants a solution to the problem of detecting patients that are at risk of attempting suicide. The difficulties in identifying patients that are at risk are equally frustrating and stressful for all parties, all over Europe.

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