

# **A systematic review on the predictors and consequences of receiving a diagnostic label of Functional Disorders.**

M.Tattan, MD, MSc<sup>1</sup>, J.G.M. Rosmalen, PhD<sup>1</sup>, D.J.C. Hanssen, PhD<sup>1</sup>

*University of Groningen, University Medical Center Groningen, Interdisciplinary Center Psychopathology and Emotion regulation, Groningen, the Netherlands*

Corresponding author: m.tattan@umcg.nl

## **Objective**

Functional Disorders (FD) are highly prevalent conditions that present a serious challenge to patients and healthcare workers. Inconsistencies in diagnostic labeling of these syndromes has been reported in published literature. Many patients who meet the criteria for a diagnosis of FD do not receive a formal diagnosis. This systematic review aims to gather available knowledge on the predictors and consequences of receiving a diagnostic label for patients with FD.

## **Methods**

A comprehensive search of PubMed, PsycINFO, and Embase databases was conducted based on a developed search strategy including FD diagnostic labels, predictors, and consequences. Both quantitative and qualitative research papers were included along with articles published in all languages. Articles not specifically mentioning diagnostic labels, non-original studies and studies involving single pain syndromes were excluded from screening.

## **Results**

Several predictors to receiving an FD diagnostic label were found, which include female sex, high number of somatic symptoms, high intelligence, exclusion of other diagnoses and the attitudes of physicians about the labels. Consequences to receiving the FD diagnostic label consisted of initial relief, poor prognosis, poor quality of life, higher psychological distress and health dissatisfaction and stigma.

## **Conclusion**

Receiving an FD diagnostic label is predicted by many factors and leads to significant consequences for patients living with these conditions. Better understanding of the predictors and consequences of FD labeling is important to guide professionals to consider the impacts of providing the FD label for patients.