

[2] Case Vignette

A 53-year-old female

Chief complaint: oral and arm pain

Life history

The first child of two siblings, she has a serious personality and since childhood, she has often held back to meet the expectations of others because she wanted to be a good person. After graduating from college, she married her husband, who owned a company and she was in charge of accounting and customer service.

History of present illness

In the first year of junior high school, she had numbing pain in both legs from the knees down. She visited a hospital, but the cause was not identified, and she spent some time taking painkillers. Although she was willing to take on committee chairmanships and other duties, pain was often observed in the vicinity of events, causing her to rush to the infirmary (school nurse) or leave class early. By the time she graduated from college, the pain had lessened.

When she was 40 years old, while traveling with her husband's parents, she suddenly felt a burning pain on the left side of her tongue. She visited a medical facility, but the cause was not identified. No medication or other medical treatment was given, and the pain continued to be strong.

At the age of 45, her husband's parents were hospitalized, and she continued to go to the hospital to care for them while working in the family business. One day, she developed a persistent high fever, pain in both arms from the elbows down, and was unable to move her fingers. She underwent tests at the hospital, but the cause was not identified. She was referred to the psychiatry department of the same hospital, where she was diagnosed with "adjustment disorder" and prescribed etizolam, duloxetine, and brotizolam. After taking the medication, the pain in her arms lessened and she was able to resume work. She became dependent on her medications and wanted to increase the dosage. When her doctor rejected the treatment, she repeatedly transferred to a clinic that would prescribe the medication. Her oral pain worsened, and the amount of medication she took increased. In addition to prescription drugs, she often purchased painkillers and other medications at pharmacies and took by herself.

At 53 years of age, her husband and employees noted that she was becoming more active and more often in a heightened mood, and she and her husband visited the psychiatrist.

Applicants are required to submit an abstract responding to the following questions.

- Q1. What is the diagnosis of this case? Describe the examination, comorbidities, and differential diagnosis in your answer.
- Q2. What type of treatment or intervention would you provide? Describe the use of medication, psychotherapy, social resources, etc.
- Q3. Describe the typical pathways for patients with severe pain to seek medical care and the departments they visit in your country. Also, describe the situation in your country with regard to commonly used drugs, interventions, and problems.
- Q4. What is your approach to patients who repeatedly transferred from one doctor to another? Describe the responses in your country, including hospital linkages, referral systems, and coordination of social resources.