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INVESTIGATING CARDIAC RELATED ADVERSE EFFECTS IN A CLOZAPINE-TREATED PATIENT COHORT

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Objectives: Myocarditis and cardiomyopathy are recognised serious and potentially fatal adverse effects of clozapine treatment, and are significantly more often related to clozapine treatment than other first and second-generation antipsychotics.

The current study retrospecively examines echocardiographic recordings from 100 patients diagnosed with schizophrenia and treated with clozapine, for evidence of cardiac related adverse effects. Methods: Transthoracic echocardiographic recordings from patients treated at Barwon Health, Geelong, Australia, were conducted on subjects prior to commencing clozapine treatment and were then repeated after approximately 12 months of therapy. Echocardiogram reports were examined for left ventricular dysfunction. White blood cell counts, co mediations, creatine kinase – MB and serum troponin I levels were also investigated.

Results: Changes in left ventricular functioning, including left ventricular diastolic end diameter, left ventricular shortening and ejection fraction between the two groups are reported.

Conclusions: While changes were seen in left ventricular functioning between the two groups, further investigations into the association between clozapine and cardiac functioning should be conducted to further clarify this relationship.