

The Effectiveness of Short-term Psychoeducational Program for Patients Suffering from Schizophrenia and Related Disorders

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Objective: to assess the effectiveness of short-term psychoeducational program for patients suffering from schizophrenia.

Methods: A prospective comparative non-randomized study of the effectiveness of an eight-session psychoeducational program for patients with schizophrenia was conducted in Republic Mental Health Center (Minsk, Belarus). Patient outcome measures were knowledge about disease, insight, compliance, social functioning, quality of life and readmission in hospital. The patients admitted in hospital was included in the study. All participants was divided into two groups: one of them received pharmacotherapy and took part in psychoeducational program, other (control) received only pharmacotherapy (standard therapy). The evaluation was conducted at base-line, at post-intervention for psychoeducational group and from same time (14 days) for controls and at 2-year follow-up for both.

Results: A statistically significant increase in knowledge of schizophrenia and insight was demonstrated at post-intervention in psychoeducational group, but not in control. A statistically significant increase in compliance, social functioning and quality of life was demonstrated at post-intervention in both groups. The knowledge was remained and social functioning significantly improved and other variables (insight, compliance and quality of life) non-significantly decreased at follow-up in the psychoeducational group. The social functioning non-significantly improved and other outcomes non-significantly decreased at follow-up in control group. The statistically significant benefit of the psychoeducational program in terms of knowledge about disease and insight at post-treatment and in terms of insight at follow-up in comparison with standard treatment was revealed. The risk of readmissions (relative risk, odds ratio) was significantly lower in the psychoeducational group during 2 years and survival time was significantly longer.

Conclusions: A short-term psychoeducational program seems to be able to influence knowledge, insight and social functioning of patients with schizophrenia at post-intervention and at 2-year follow-up. This program demonstrated benefit in terms of risk of readmission and time-to-readmission during 2 years in comparison standard treatment.