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Abstract Information

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Incorporation of Family intervention in schizophrenia

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Abstract:

The adverse consequences for family members of severe psychiatric conditions have been studied for five decades, in the context of the Brazilian psychiatric reform. This study aimed to assess the efficacy of family interventions by relatives of schizophrenic patients under community care, specifically targeting relapse and family burden as outcomes. The work also intends to initiate a discussion of the opportunities and barriers to the incorporation of that procedure in the public community mental health centers in Brazil. The theoretical and methodological foundations of that approach are briefly introduced. Independent researchers conducted the selection and analyses of the pertinence and quality of trials identified, following a previously developed protocol. Our research strategy included: electronic database searches including Lilacs, Medline, Cochrane Library, government and congress web sites, examination of the bibliographies in articles. The study included a detailed analysis of the quality of design and performance and the clinical heterogeneity. Eleven randomized or quasi randomized trials met the inclusion criteria. The summary relative risk of relapse was favorable to family intervention, with estimated efficacy reaching nearly sixty per cent. Summary relative risk in the cognitive-behavioral therapy trials subgroup, was equivalent to that of the behavioral therapy subgroup, and the pragmatic subgroup, although the pragmatic trials were generally analyzed for effective treatment. The difference in summary overall risk of relapse was nearly thirty per cent using the random effects model. Only four trials analyzed family burden as outcome, including different dimensions of burden. Results of individual trials were generally favorable to family intervention, for both the objective and subjective dimensions. Nowadays, the general approach of Family Intervention is not part of the Brazilian program for the mental health community centers. Our conclusions regarding the incorporation of evidence based family intervention in our community centers. It requires flexibility on the specific staff requirements, appreciation of this approach by the various professionals in the mental health team, and that the current work done by the multiple families group be maintained. The cognitive-behavioral approach of Family Intervention for the condition schizophrenia is an efficacious procedure for the community care of that condition, according to scientific evidences, for both the patient and his/her relatives' health. The duration of the Family Intervention varies according to the severity of the condition, the characteristics of the family, the spectrum of the mental health community program and to the social context.
