

AS17-02 - PSYCHOEDUCATION AND PSYCHOTHERAPY OF SCHIZOPHRENIA PATIENTS

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Although medication is the most important part of treatment, psychotherapy can also play an important role in helping schizophrenics manage anxiety and deal with interpersonal relationships, and treatment for the disorder usually consists of a combination of medication, therapy, and various types of rehabilitation. Family therapy has worked well for many patients, educating both patients and their families about the nature of schizophrenia and helping them in their cooperative effort to cope with the disorder. Psychoeducational intervention, also at its first level (information group), has shown the capacity of increasing the adherence to pharmacological treatment. On the other hand, the second level (support group, psychoeducational family intervention) is able to reduce both the familial EE level and the rate of relapse in chronic schizophrenic patients. The stress-vulnerability model conceives of the symptoms of schizophrenia as resulting from the actions of environmental stresses on the vulnerable individual. Psychotherapies are ideally suited to address a number of stress and vulnerability factors. There now exists a body of literature, including a number of methodologically sound randomized controlled trials covering four types of psychotherapy of schizophrenia which can be implemented in the general clinical setting: family interventions; cognitive behavioural psychotherapy; social skills training; and psychoeducation. Data on effectiveness from these trials can be used to guide clinical practice.

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