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Introduction

The use of psychotherapeutic strategies in people with intellectual disabilities (ID) is at different stages in various countries in Europe. The UK and Ireland use special modified psychotherapeutic programmes for people with ID but there appears not to be many resources in psychotherapy in other European countries. The presentation considers the different psychotherapeutic approaches published in the scientific literature within the last ten years.

Aim

To ascertain the use of psychotherapy in people with intellectual disabilities in Europe.

Method

'Psychotherapy', 'intellectual', 'developmental', and 'disabilities' were chosen as keywords in searching the databases. Abstracts of publications were grouped in to psychotherapy models, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, Systemic Psychotherapy, Analytic Psychotherapy. Sub-groups included other models, for example group psychotherapy. The formats of publications were defined as case report, structured assessment, analysis of therapeutic methods

Results

The database research revealed nearly 300 publications on psychotherapy in people with ID over a ten-year period. It supports the assertion of the use of psychotherapy in ID. Most publications reported on work undertaken in the United Kingdom. The presentation gives more detailed information about the relationship between cognitive behavioural and analytic-oriented strategies, intervention type and study characteristics.

Conclusion

There is currently a good evidence base on the use of psychotherapeutic methods in working with people with ID. Much of it is in the English language literature. There is potential for the development of models to be applied in ID. The use of psychotherapeutic approaches in ID needs to be encouraged across healthcare systems in Europe.