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## Improvement in Social Cognition and Functional Outcome After Group Cognitive Remediation Treatment (rehacop Program): a Randomized Controlled Trial

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**Introduction:** Deficits in social cognition are related to functional disability in schizophrenia. Therefore, new treatment programs should address these deficits in schizophrenia.

**Objectives:** The goal of this study was to test if neurocognition, social cognitive deficits and functional disability improve after group cognitive remediation with a neuropsychological tool: the REHACOP program.

**Methods:** One hundred and one patients with schizophrenia were randomly allocated into experimental or control groups. The patients allocated on the experimental group (N= 52) received a group cognitive rehabilitation treatment using REHACOP. They attended 36 sessions of 90 minutes during three months. During the same time and frequency, patients under control condition (N=49) received Occupational activities. Both groups received treatment as usual (TAU). Patients underwent clinical, neuropsychological, social cognitive (Theory of mind, emotional perception, attributional style and social perception) and functional outcome (UPSA) pre- and post treatment assessments.

**Results:** Repeated measures of MANOVA showed that Group (REHACOP vs occupational therapy) x Time (pre vs post-treatment) interactions were significant for neurocognition total score ( $F=16.54$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), social perception ( $F=8.05$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), theory of mind ( $F=14.19$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) and UPSA ( $F=12.14$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) showing that experimental group obtained significant improvement when compared to controls. Attributional style did not show significant improvements.

**Conclusions:** Our results suggest that REHACOP is an effective group cognitive remediation program for minimizing existing cognitive, social cognitive and functional disability.