Peer to Peer - Support in Severe Mental Disorders: Affective Disorders, Psychosis and Personality Disorder – a Randomized Controlled Trial

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Introduction
Individuals with serious mental illness (SMI) are at considerably higher risk for morbidity and mortality than those in the general population. In these diagnoses – a refinement of intervention is required, the user perspective overall is still underrepresented.

Objectives
In mental health Services there is an international trend toward recovery-orientated interventions, like Peer-support (PS) in formal mental health services. There is a raising but still insufficient evidence for it`s benefits

Aims
In Germany this is the first try to implement and research peer support services area-wide in psychiatric facilities to provide a low-threshold service that aims individual recovery. This project forms a part of 'psychenet ', a project supported by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research of Germany during 2011 - 2014 and investigates the effect of peer support on psychosocial factors, functioning and hospital admissions.

Methods
In a controlled multi-centre-trial involving 10 hospital facilities in Hamburg – 216 in- and outpatients suffering from affective disorders, psychoses or personality disorders get randomized to either receive additional Peer-Support at most half a year aligned to individual requirements or treatment as usual. A mixed method repeated measurement analysis is conducted.

Results
Subjects refill questionnaires and get rated by clinicians at three points of measurement: Entry of the half year of intervention, after the intervention and in a six month follow up. Psychosocial Outcomes, global functioning, and in and outpatient days were assessed. There is a significant positive Effect for the PS of the primary outcome. Results will be presented