

Effectiveness of Group Psychoeducation On Psychiatric Inpatients

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INTRODUCTION In recent years, psychoeducational interventions involving inpatients have been steadily increasing, in Italy. Yet, few studies were carried on to assess their effectiveness in preventing relapse and rehospitalization.

AIMS To assess the effectiveness of group psychoeducation on inpatients and ward atmosphere.

METHODS Case-control study, involving psychiatric inpatients. Cases: patients who attended group psychoeducation during hospital stay. Controls: patients who did not attend group psychoeducation during hospital stay. Time-to-relapse in a 6-months' fixed follow-up was studied with Cox-regressions. Ward atmosphere was recorded by nurses using an ad hoc scale developed by the Italian Istituto Superiore di Sanità, and compared with Wilcoxon's test. Statistics performed with STATA 13.0

RESULTS Total sample: 82 patients, 55% women. 39 cases, mean age 42 (± 13.32), 53.85% women. 43 controls, mean age 45 (± 12.84), 55.81% women. No significant differences emerged in the two groups' features, that differed only by exposure to psychoeducation. Survival analysis showed no significant differences between cases (exposed to psychoeducation) and controls (not exposed) concerning time to relapse (Hazard Ratio 0.59, 95%CI: 0.13-2.75). Median ward atmosphere when patients attended the group was not different than when they did not attend it ($p=0.17$). Most of patients attending psychoeducation reported at discharge to have found it 'useful', they would 'attend it in the future again', and 'group topics were not difficult'.

CONCLUSIONS It is not possible to say if group psychoeducation was protective against relapse after hospital discharge or not. Yet, patients' positive feedbacks encourage further research on it.