

An issue however for modern psychiatry as a whole is how best general and forensic psychiatry should interact.

PS02.03

Quality assurance in forensic psychiatry

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The problems of quality assurance have been discussed in a working group between specialists in forensic psychiatry and judges of the High Court in Karlsruhe / Germany. This resulted in two publications on "Minimal standarts for the evaluation of legal responsibility" (2005) and "Minimal standarts for the evaluation of prognosis in criminal offenders"(2007).

Principles and consequences of these standards and implications for the forensic evaluation of offenders with personality disorders will be presented.

Workshop: Scientific reading and writing in psychiatry

W01.01

Publication trends in high impact factor journals 1994-2004

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Aims: To describe the characteristics of psychiatric research and their changes within one decade by analysing the publications in three high impact general psychiatric journals.

Methods: All articles published in the "American Journal of Psychiatry", "British Journal of Psychiatry" and "Archives of General Psychiatry" in 1994 and 2004 were considered for analysis. The publications were classified as "research" or "non-research" articles and further categorised according to a range of variables including "methodology", "research area", "subject matter"; "number of participants" and "statement on funding". Data were analysed descriptively.

Results: In 2004 the overall percentage of non-research articles was 6,8% higher than in 1994. The use of different research methods remained fairly stable, with the exception of case-control studies, which accounted for a slightly higher percentage of all publications in 2004 compared to 1994. Further relevant developments included the tremendous increase in published studies involving neuro imaging techniques from 1994 to 2004. An increase in publications was also found for genetic and cross-cultural studies, while the number publications in most other research areas remained relatively stable. Moreover, the percentage of papers reporting funding also increased significantly from 1994 to 2004.

Conclusions: The systematic analysis of journal content can be used to assess the state of psychiatric knowledge and practice. Highlighting advancements and changes over time it may reflect research trends and policies.

W01.02

Qualitative research methods in psychiatric science

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Background and Aims: Qualitative research has been met with growing interest in recent years. Several trends in medical and psychiatric practice, including patient orientation, the recovery movement and the search for evidence-based psychotherapeutic interventions, have propelled scientific inquiry into subjective perspectives on experiencing mental health problems, their consequences, and psychiatric services. While initially largely criticised as lacking scientific rigour, the value of qualitative research has increasingly been recognised, following a certain disenchantment with genetic research, the acknowledgement of methodological limitations in measuring subjective constructs such as needs, quality of life or stigma with standardised tools, and the definition of clear quality criteria for qualitative studies.

Methods: Multiple databases (Ovid Medline, PsycINFO, PsychLit, Cochrane Reviews) were scanned for relevant publications in the period from 1990 to 2007.

Results: A proliferation of qualitative literature could be noted, especially from 2000 onward. Published research focuses on patients' and caregivers' experiences of mental health problems (subjective illness models, stigma, help-seeking motivations) and of using mental health services (expectations, empowerment, service evaluation). Among mental health professionals, experiences of service provision (service development, job motivation, stress & burnout) were studied.

Conclusions: Qualitative methods are becoming an integral part of the methodological canon of psychiatric research. This presentation gives an overview of publication trends regarding topics covered, journals featuring qualitative papers, and methodological quality criteria. It further focuses on fields of application for qualitative vs. quantitative methods and discusses specific requirements on scientific writing in publishing qualitative data.

W01.03

Current developments and challenges for publishing houses

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New technologies have always brought new challenges even as they solve old problems. The 21st century is seeing a revolution in scientific, technical and medical publishing. The stage was set a few years ago, when publishers began migrating their content to the online environment, in parallel with continued print publication, first journals, then books. Initially, the premise was still that the print product was primary and the electronic version just a way of reaching a larger audience. As new functionality was introduced, expectations were raised and content now has to be much more than an electronic version of a printed page: it must include easy cross-referencing both internally within a document and to external sources, without regard to the owner or publisher of those sources; it must accommodate audiovisual material; and all this must be done rapidly and seamlessly.

But the target has already moved further away: the real challenge now is to deliver the interactivity that will be expected from the generation that communicates through MySpace and Facebook. How do we maintain the status of the textbook when students look for answers on Wikipedia? Who will read a journal paper describing a particular gene when they can log into GenBank? What is the role of the clinical reference work when doctors carry PDAs loaded with guidelines and treatment algorithms? The publishing house that successfully answers these questions will be the one that survives to face the challenges of the next decade.

W01.04

Why books?

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