

P02-347 - THERAPEUTIC PROCESSES IN FAMILY GROUPS FOR HOSPITALIZED PATIENTS WITH MAJOR DEPRESSION: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

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Introduction: Family-based interventions have shown to be effective in the treatment of major depression. In a recent RCT, systemic family groups led to significantly higher rates of treatment responders and higher rates of patients no longer using antidepressant medication at 15 months follow-up compared to standard care.

Objectives: In order to better understand the underlying mechanisms of change, helpful treatment experiences of depressive patients and their partners in the family groups were explored.

Methods: 34 depressive patients and their partners were asked to fill out an open-ended questionnaire investigating helpful experiences during treatment at the end of a 6 bi-weekly group session cycle. Responses were analyzed using the interpretative phenomenological approach (IPA) by three different researchers.

Results: Ten recurring themes were reported as helpful by both the depressed patients and their partners:

- (1) Presence,
- (2) Cohesion,
- (3) Support,
- (4) Openness,
- (5) Discussion,
- (6) Self revelation,
- (7) Insight,
- (8) Progress,
- (9) Observational experiences and
- (10) Guidance from therapist.

Conclusions: The results of this study help to get insights in the therapeutic factors, which should be emphasized in family groups.