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Enhancing the effect of psychotherapy through systematic client feedback in outpatient mental healthcare: preliminary results of a cluster randomized trial.

A.M. (Bram) Bovendeerd, PhD candidate

Does PCOMS have a beneficial effect on treatment outcome?

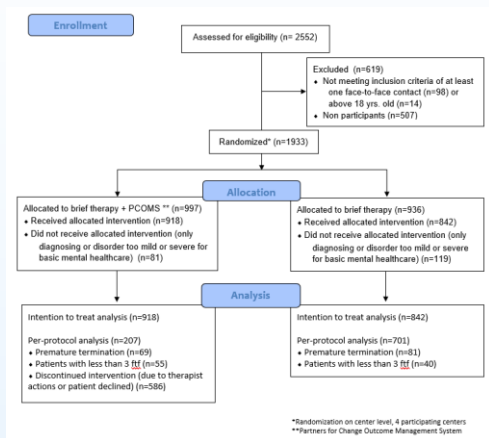
Objective

Systematic client feedback (SCF), the regular monitoring and informing of patients' progress during therapy to patient and therapist, has been found to have effects on treatment outcomes varying from very positive to slightly negative. Several prior studies have been biased by researcher allegiance or lack of an independent outcome measure. The current study has taken this into account and aims to clarify the effects of SCF in outpatient psychological treatment.

Method

Outpatients (n=902) of four centers offering brief psychological treatments were randomized to either treatment as usual (TAU) or TAU with SCF based on the Partners for Change Outcome Management System (PCOMS). Primary outcome measure was the Outcome Questionnaire (OQ-45). Effects of the two treatment conditions on treatment outcome, patient satisfaction, dropout rate, costs, and treatment duration were assessed using a three-level multilevel analysis. DSM-classification, sex, and age of each patient were included as covariates.

Enrollment



Preliminary results

In both intention to treat and per protocol analyses, SCF significantly improved treatment outcome. No significant effects were found on the other outcome variables.

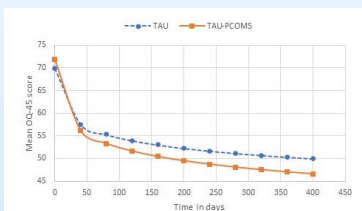


Figure 2. Growth curves of the OQ.

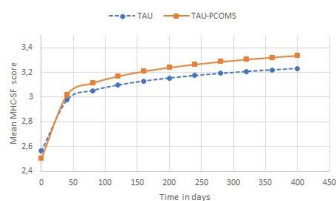


Figure 3. Growth curves of the MHC-SF.

Conclusions

Addition of systematic client feedback to treatment as usual, is likely to have a beneficial impact in outpatient psychological treatment.

Outcome Rating Scale (feedback on functioning)

Individually
(Personal well-being)

Interpersonally
(Family, close relationships)

Socially
(Work, school, friendships)

Overall
(General sense of well-being)

Session Rating Scale (feedback on working alliance)

Relationship

I did not feel heard, understood, and respected. ----- I felt heard, understood, and respected.

Goals and Topics

We did not work on or talk about what I wanted to work on and talk about. ----- We worked on and talked about what I wanted to work on and talk about.

Approach or Method

The therapist's approach is not a good fit for me. ----- The therapist's approach is a good fit for me.

Overall

There was something missing in the session today. ----- Overall, today's session was right for me.

The Heart and Soul of Change Project
<https://heartandsoulofchange.com>
© 2002, Scott D. Miller, Barry L. Duncan, & Lynn Johnson

Main characteristics

Expected Recovery Curves: ORS > 24, SRS > 34. Frequency of measurement: every session. Implementation: 1,5 day training. Advantages: easy to understand. Challenges: creating openness in giving and receiving personal feedback.

What did patients say about PCOMS?

'It helps me focus on the task at hand'
'Why only 4 lines? Can I add one?'
'Feedback is only useful if I know why you are asking me for feedback'
'PCOMS should be optional, not obligated'
'I don't like PCOMS. It is painful to see that I do not improve'
'I like its focus on functioning, not on disorders'

Takeaways

In this cohort-study PCOMS had a beneficial effect
PCOMS can be useful (Implementation requires a careful plan of action)
In general patients like PCOMS (when it is optional, not obligated)

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