
PREVALENCE AND BURDEN OF AT-RISK CRITERIA OF PSYCHOSIS AND HELP-SEEKING BEHAVIOUR: DESIGN AND RESPONSE OF A POPULATION SURVEY

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The prevalence and psychopathological significance of current at-risk criteria in the general population when assessed in a clinical interview by trained professionals is still unknown. Therefore we started in June 2011 a study in the general population to assess (1) 3-month prevalence of at-risk criteria, (2) co-morbidity, psychosocial functioning and quality of life and (3) rate and predictors of help-seeking associated with them.

Inclusion criteria were (i) residency in the Canton Bern, (ii) age 16–40 years and (iii) telephone number available. Exclusion criteria: (i) life-time diagnosis of any psychosis and (ii) insufficient language skills. Ineligibility is defined by invalid address, unavailability during the recruitment period or deceased. Persons of suitable age are drawn randomly from the population register of the Canton Bern; corresponding telephone numbers for the delivered addresses are sought using the general phone register and internet.

356 (13.7%) of our initial sample of 2'585 persons with address plus phone number turned out as ineligible and were replaced. After replacement, altogether 622 (24.1%) did not meet the inclusion criterion of an available telephone number. The remaining 1'963 persons (inclusion sample: 76%) were contacted. Of the inclusion sample, 1'341 persons were willing to participate (participants: 68%). Of these, 108 persons (8%) met exclusion criteria, mainly by insufficient language skills. Of the 19 psychotic cases (1.4% of participants), 9 had never sought treatment and, consequently, never been diagnosed as being psychotic. 1'229 (91.7%) completed the whole interview, only 4 (0.3%) aborted the interview.