

P02-352 - OUTPATIENT GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY: IMPACT ON NUMBER AND MEAN DURATION OF RE-ENTRIES IN ACUTE INPATIENT UNIT

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Introduction: Outpatient group psychotherapy began in our department in 2002 as a complement to the acute inpatient unit. Patients with heterogeneous diagnoses were included before or after a short-duration stay in the unit. Clinicians' impression was that re-entries to the acute unit were less frequent and shorter after group therapy.

Objectives: The objective is to determine the real impact of group psychotherapy on the number and mean duration of these re-entries.

Methods: Data was collected for 156 patients during period of two years. The number and mean duration of hospitalization in the psychiatric acute unit were registered for each patient during the year before and in the year after therapy to be analyzed and compared.

Results: Before attending group psychotherapy 60.3% of the patients were hospitalized in the acute unit (39.1% once, 12.8% twice, 6.4% three times, 1.9% four times). 65.4% had no re-entries in the following year; 71% of those who did had one re-entry. The mean number of entries per year in the acute unit before therapy was 0.92, while the mean after therapy was 0.52. The mean stay was 7.86 days before therapy, and 4.62 days after. The mean differences between before and after entries were significant in statistical analyses.

Conclusions: Group psychotherapy seems to have effects on number and duration of re-entries to the acute unit for most patients in the different diagnostic categories. These findings have important implications, as this form of therapy is cost-effective and available for a wide range of psychiatric patients.