

S51-03

ASSESSING SOCIAL FUNCTIONING IN SCHIZOPHRENIA

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Aims: Social functioning has increasingly become recognised as an important outcome in schizophrenia. While measures of symptom status are highly developed and widely used there has been only limited work on developing instruments for measuring social functioning in a reliable and consistent manner. We aimed to review the schizophrenia literature to identify the structured social functioning measures that have been used with any frequency and compare their features (1).

Method: A detailed electronic literature search (1990 - 2006) using the key words schizophrenia and social function was carried out and those papers containing details of any structured assessment of social function were used. The most frequently used instruments were identified. A search was also conducted for the use of social function measures in trials of antipsychotics in schizophrenia.

Results: 301 articles employed 87 potential social function measures and of these only 20 were used 3 or more times. Only 14 RCTs of antipsychotics employed them.

Conclusions: There is limited consensus on the definition and measurement of social functioning but two or three scales show promise for regular usage.

(1) Burns T, Patrick D. Social functioning as an outcome measure in schizophrenia studies. *Acta Psychiatr Scand* 2007 Oct 17.