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COMPLEX INTERVENTION IN SCHIZOPHRENIA. RESULTS OF AN INTEGRATED CARE PROJECT IN GERMAN PSYCHIATRY AND PSYCHOTHERAPY

B. Janssen, C. Schmidt-Kraepelin, W. Gaebel

Heinrich-Heine-University, LVR-Klinikum Duesseldorf, Duesseldorf, Germany

Introduction: "High utilizing" schizophrenic patients are a problem in routine inpatient care.

Objectives: A complex intervention with improved cooperation between in- and outpatient services was applied to 46 "high utilizing" patients after discharge from inpatient care during an intervention phase of 6 months. The study was controlled by a matched group of 47 patients receiving treatment as usual.

Aims: The goal of this study was to prevent rehospitalizations and thus optimize satisfaction with treatment and quality of life in patients suffering from schizophrenia.

Methods: The intervention was based on a computerized decision support module. Eight psychiatrists in private practices were supplied with this software to obtain guideline-based recommendations according to current psychopathology and clinical state. A local hospital project team arranged specifically suggested interventions. Moderator variables such as socio-demographical aspects or influences of certain interventions to rehospitalization rate were analyzed

Results: Sociodemographical aspects showed no differences between both groups. The rehospitalization rate and the mean length of inpatient treatment were reduced to nearly 50% (Interventiongroup). The rate of readmissions increased in the control group, leading to a difference of 23% between both groups. Cost effectiveness was higher in the interventiongroup than in the controlgroup.

Discussion: The most important single factor was the participation in coping skills training, but only the guideline consistent complex therapies caused the significant overall result.

Satisfaction increased during 6 months and remained constant during 12 months of follow up. The project described an important step to gain evidence for integrated care for patients with schizophrenia.