

Change in knowledge and attitude of families of patients with schizophrenia : A preliminary Egyptian Educational Program

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Aim of the work: To design an educational program about schizophrenia and to study the effect of educating relatives on various aspects.

Study design: not mentioned but we can consider it as cross sectional, longitudinal case control study.

Method: the study consists of 90 relatives of 50 schizophrenics. (Not more than 2 relatives for each patient, including the main caregiver of the patient). The schizophrenics are divided randomly into 34 cases and 16 controls. Relatives of the 34 cases receive the educational program and 30 relatives of the 16 controls are allocated to routine care. Relatives (both cases and controls) are selected randomly and are subjected to the following scales: The Community Attitudes toward the mentally ill (CAMI), Fear and Behavioral Intentions Inventory (FABI), Knowledge about Schizophrenia Interview (KASI) and Experience of Care giving Inventory (ECI). Baseline and Effect-of-Program assessments are done.

Results: The educational program appears to have a positive impact on relatives of schizophrenics. This is evidenced by the fact that educating relatives show an overall significant improvement in attitudes, gain in knowledge, and reduction of care giving burdens, which are not detected in non educated relatives.

Changes in attitudes and knowledge are maintained at 3-month follow-up.

Conclusion: Family education improves their knowledge and coping with the illness, and promotes the psychological health of the patients. Also it increases awareness of the caregivers about the various aspects of the illness, improves their attitudes towards their ill relatives, and decreases their care-giving burden.