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ADVANCES IN COGNITIVE BEHAVIOUR THERAPY FOR PSYCHOSIS

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Introduction: CBT for psychosis has been developed over the past two decades and is now recommended by most clinical guidelines for schizophrenia internationally.

Aims & objectives: To provide an up-date on advances and controversies in CBT for psychosis.

Method: Evidence from recent meta-analyses (including Lynch et al, 2010) and randomised controlled trials will be reviewed. These have generally demonstrated effectiveness in early and treatment-resistant schizophrenia of CBT, and other specific indications, e.g. co-morbid substance misuse, aggressive behaviour, command hallucinations. Treatment is based on engaging the patient in a therapeutic relationship, developing an agreed formulation and then the use of a range of techniques for hallucinations, delusions and negative symptoms.

Results: Evidence of effectiveness in treatment-resistant psychosis remains strong but some areas for intervention remain under-researched. A series of studies are on-going which will provide more information about effective ways of working.

Conclusions: CBT is a very important but under-used intervention which can make clinically significant differences to patient's lives.