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SOCIAL COGNITION AND PSYCHOSOCIAL FUNCTIONING IN SCHIZOPHRENIA

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Ability for empathy and theory of mind are diminished in patients with schizophrenia. These kinds of social cognition are, however, necessary to interact with other people and obtain a well-balanced psychosocial functioning level, i.e. to have friends, to go for work, to be in partnership and so on. Own studies revealed that disturbances in social cognition are accompanied by fMRI activation deficits in distinct regions of the underlying neuronanatomical loop in schizophrenia. The most significant difference compared to healthy controls was found in the region of the anterior cingulate cortex (ACC) and medial prefrontal cortex (mPFC). We think that training of social cognition would improve both the neurobiological hypoactivation and the ability for empathy and theory of mind. As consequence, psychosocial functioning of the patients should be become better as measured e.g. by the personal and social performance scale (PSP). To emphasise the close relationship between social cognition, its underlying neuobiology and psychosocial functioning is the main purpose of this lecture.