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Medication Adherence Patterns and Influencing Factors in the Early Stages of Psychotic Disorders

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Introduction

Medication adherence is a matter of relevance for early treatment of psychotic disorder.

Objectives

To understand pattern of medication adherence in this population and factors influencing.

Aims

To understand the antipsychotic adherence pattern in early stages of psychotic disorder and to identify factors that influence.

Methods

Natural observation study of 136 patients of first-episode psychosis presenting to Early intervention service in multicultural South London. Data derived from case notes and interviews using standard rating scales for first 18 months.

Results

Only 39% of patients (n=50) were 100% time adherent with antipsychotic medication in the first month (rest were 83%). Patients using illicit substances were less likely 100% adherent (Pearson $\chi^2= 13.1$, $df=1$, $p=0.001$). Caucasian patients were more likely to be fully adherent in the first month than Ethnic minority patients (Pearson $\chi^2= 7.5$, $df=1$, $p=0.009$). During the follow-up period about 57% patients had weeks of not taking antipsychotic, mostly after recovery from first episode. Ethnicity (Pearson $\chi^2=4.5$, $df=1$, $p=0.05$) and experience of extrapyramidal side-effect (Pearson $\chi^2= 5.6$, $df=1$, $p=0.02$) were associated with this gap. Involvement of a carer in treatment was associated with better (100%) adherence during follow-up (Pearson $\chi^2= 4.9$, $df=1$, $p=0.03$).

Conclusions

Interventions in early stages of psychosis should focus on therapies involving carers/ families and giving attention to illicit substances use and delivered in way relevant to the local ethnic population. Also antipsychotics chosen carefully, using a lower dose and actively looking for emergence of side-effects.