

Author's Accepted Manuscript

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PII: S0165-1781(16)31602-X

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2016.12.062>

Reference: PSY10309

To appear in: *Psychiatry Research*

Received date: 19 September 2016

Revised date: 3 December 2016

Accepted date: 31 December 2016

Cite this article as: C. Darmedru, C. Demily and N. Franck, Cognitive remediation and social cognitive training for violence in schizophrenia: a systematic review, *Psychiatry Research* <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2016.12.062>

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Cognitive remediation and social cognitive training for violence in schizophrenia: a systematic review.

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Background:

A significant correlation exists between violence and schizophrenia (SCZ). Recent studies matched some cognitive deficits like strong risk factors for violence with interesting applications in terms of treatment. Our objective was to conduct a systematic review of the effectiveness of cognitive remediation (CR) and social cognitive training (SCT) in the management of violent and aggressive behaviors in SCZ. *Methods:* The electronic databases Pubmed, Web of Science, Cochrane Library and ScienceDirect were searched in, using combinations of terms relating to SCZ, CR and violence. Studies were selected and data were extracted using a PRISMA statement. Inclusion criteria were adults with SCZ and a documented collection of disruptive and violent behaviors, for whom researchers had used a CR or SCT program. *Results:* Eleven studies were identified, two related to non-specific CR intervention and nine to codified CR or SCT programs. Results showed that these programs had a positive impact on the control and reduction of global aggressive attitudes and physical assaults. Therapeutic targets were social cognition and executive functions through the improvement of interpersonal relationships and impulsivity feature respectively. Effectiveness was proved at various stages of the illness, in different types of patients and units, with effects persisting for up to 12 months after interruption of CR. Conclusions are limited by some methodological restrictions. *Conclusion:* Although current evidences need to be completed with further randomized studies, CR and SCT appear to be promising approaches in the management of violence in SCZ.

Keywords: schizophrenia / violence / neurocognition / social cognition / cognitive remediation / social cognitive training / systematic review

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