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Efficacy and feasibility of the Integrated Psychological Therapy for outpatients with schizophrenia in Greece: final results of a RCT.

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Abstract

The goal of this study was to evaluate the efficacy and the feasibility of cognitive remediation group therapy in patients with schizophrenia in Greece. For this purpose, the cognitive part of the Integrated Psychological Therapy (IPT), focusing on neuro- and social cognition, was compared in a randomized controlled trial (RCT) with treatment as usual (TAU). 48 outpatients took part in the study. IPT groups received 20 biweekly 1-hour-therapy sessions. A test-battery was assessed at baseline, after therapy, and at a 3-month follow-up. Regarding cognitive functioning, significant effects favouring IPT were found in working memory and social perception during therapy and at follow-up. No effects could be found in verbal memory and vigilance. Significant effects favoring IPT were found in negative symptoms, in insight and in general symptoms during therapy and at follow-up using the Positive and Negative Syndrome Scale (PANSS). No effects were evident in positive symptoms and in psychosocial functioning. Significant effects favoring TAU were found in the quality of life assessment at follow-up. The study supports evidence for the feasibility and efficacy of IPT in psychiatric care in Greece and it hopefully will initiate the broader use of evidenced-based treatments like IPT in Greek Psychiatry.

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