A trial of problem-solving by community mental health nurses for anxiety, depression and life difficulties among general practice patients. The CPN-GP study

Record Status
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Citation

Authors' objectives
The aim of this report was to compare the effectiveness of community mental health nurse (CMHN) problem-solving and generic CMHN care, against usual general practitioner (GP) care in reducing symptoms, alleviating problems, and improving social functioning and quality of life for people living in the community with common mental disorders; and to undertake a cost comparison of each CMHN treatment compared with usual GP care.

Authors' conclusions
The study found that specialist mental health nurse support is no better than support from GPs for patients with anxiety, depression and reactions to life difficulties. The results suggest that healthcare providers could consider adopting policies of restricting referrals of unselected patients with common mental disorders to specialist CMHNs, although there may be other roles in primary care that CMHNs could play effectively. Further research should address the predictors of chronicity in common mental disorders and target extra treatment. More research is also needed into the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of problem-solving treatment for other disorders, of facilitated self-help treatments for common mental disorders and of CMHN care for people with severe and enduring mental illnesses, as well as the prevention of mental disorders.

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