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A retrospective quasi-experimental study of dog assisted intervention for patients with persistent mental illness

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Background: This study examines whether changes in negative beliefs about oneself, others, and the world occur as a result of support group intervention aimed at preventing the development of chronic mental conditions and further explores whether changes in negative beliefs during early intervention mediate long-term changes in psychology and functioning.

Methods: Forty two participants were analyzed to 12-week dog assistance programs. Changes in negative beliefs were examined from pre-intervention to post-intervention retrospectively.

Results: Negative beliefs improved across the group. As expected, before intervention more severe negative beliefs were associated with higher initial trauma reactions and these negative beliefs generally improved from pre intervention to post intervention. Moreover, for the brief intervention, changes in perceptions of self and one's safety mediated longer-term changes in trauma-related symptoms.

Conclusions: The present results highlight the potential importance of changes in negative beliefs in long-term adjustment with the dog assisted program.

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The analysis of quality of life for psychiatric inpatients' family caregivers and their social support -Data from Shandong in China

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In China, it is estimated that there are 16 million patients who are mentally ill. Studies have found that family caregivers take on the most prominent role in taking care of people with mental illness. This study aims to evaluate QoL and social support of family caregivers when providing care for a family member with mental health, to determine whether social support is the key influencing factor and to identify additional factors. This is a cross-sectional study design. Participants were recruited and independently interviewed using the questionnaire, consisting of demographic characteristics, SF-36 form, and social support rating scale. Multiple stepwise regression analysis was used to analysis the factors affecting the quality of life. Compared with the QoL of the general population in China, this study found that family caregivers in Shandong perceived poorer quality of life, especially in the aspect of role-physical, role-emotional and bodily pain. We also found that family caregivers received lower social support. Patient's illness state, care time, financial burden and objective support significantly predicted caregivers' QoL in the domain of physical health. Patient's illness state, patient's marital status, family monthly income, caregiver's knowledge about the illness, caregivers coordinating caring, life and work, subjective support received and utility of support significantly predicted caregivers' QoL in the domain of mental health. These findings suggest it is important to develop and implement effective intervention strategies to improve the quality of life of family caregivers. Mental health education campaigns need focus on knowledge about illness which patients suffered, targeting long care-time caregivers and unemployed caregivers. Besides, helping families to maintain and enhance a supportive social network may present a useful means.

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