

Project Title

A Group Therapy Program Targeting Social Competence for Patients with Traumatic Brain Injuries

Organisation(s) Involved

Tan Tock Seng Hospital

Project Period

Start date: Aug 2016

Completed date: Nov 2016

Aims

This paper describes and monitor the outcomes of a group therapy program targeting the social competence and quality of life (QOL) in patients after traumatic brain injury (TBI).

Background

Patients with traumatic brain injuries often experience difficulties in social communication skills which can impact on their quality of life and ability to reintegrate back into society. Group therapy programs have been found to benefit patients with communication impairments due to group effects of peer learning and mutual support.

Methods

Three Singaporean patients with TBI at least eight months post-injury participated in eight weekly 1.5 hour group sessions led by one speech therapist and one clinical psychologist. The Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS 21), Quality of Life after Brain Injury (QOLIBRI), and La Trobe Communication Questionnaire (LCQ) – self and close other, were administered pre- and post-intervention.

Results

Results were analysed on two patients (AL and HY) as one discontinued treatment. On the DASS 21, AL's scores improved across all scales albeit within normal ranges. HY's depression and anxiety scores reduced from the moderate to mild range, while stress scores increased from the mild to moderate range. On the QOLIBRI, AL's scores showed normalization of health-related QOL (HrQOL) post-therapy (overall score >60). HY's scores mostly deteriorated and overall HrQOL remained impaired. On the LCQ, AL perceived less communication difficulties in most domains post-therapy (total score improvement: 58 to 45). HY had improvements and deterioration across domains (total score unchanged: 72). Close others perceived patients as having increased communicative difficulties post-therapy (pre/post total scores ranging 53-67).

Lessons Learnt

Key lessons learnt/ challenges experienced specific to this project, tips/ pointers for others who wish to embark on a similar project.

Conclusion

The described social communication group therapy may impact differently on the subjective QOL and social competence in different individuals with TBI. Results of this study are limited by the small sample size. However, it is worthwhile further exploring the benefits of similar group programs for the local TBI population.

Project Category

Quality Improvement, Research, Care Redesign

Keywords

Care Redesign, Clinical Improvement, Research, Patient Centered Care, Social Communication, Social Competence, Peer Learning, Mutual Support, Group Therapy Program, Traumatic Brain Injury, Quality of Life, Patient Outcome Measures, The Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale, Quality of Life after Brain Injury, La Trobe Communication Questionnaire, Tan Tock Seng Hospital, Allied Health, Speech Therapy

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