The effectiveness of therapeutic conversation intervention for caregivers of adolescents with ADHD: a quasi-experimental design.

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Abstract

WHAT IS KNOWN ON THE SUBJECT?
Caregivers of adolescents with ADHD experience major difficulties as care providers and are in need of guidance and support. Adolescents with ADHD may develop oppositional and criminal behaviour. More than 50% have the symptoms in adulthood, and up to one-fourth with severe emotional or antisocial difficulties. There is a lack of evidence of caregivers' supporting intervention although caregiver groups have been found to contribute to better coping, decreased stress and improvements in ADHD symptoms.

WHAT DOES THIS PAPER ADD TO EXISTING KNOWLEDGE?
Primary caregivers of adolescents with ADHD experienced better quality of life after the Therapeutic Conversation Intervention. The intervention contributed to better social functioning among secondary caregivers.

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE?
The content of the Therapeutic Conversation Intervention is significant and highlights the utility of a combination of group and private sessions for caregivers of people with ADHD. The intervention can influence how services for families are organized, such that a Therapeutic Conversation Intervention could be offered on a regular basis.

ABSTRACT:

Introduction
Caregivers of adolescents with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder are burdened with tasks and many suffer from distress. Adolescents with ADHD may develop antisocial behaviour and caregiver's group can empower caregiver's supporting role.

Aim/Question
To evaluate the effectiveness of a Therapeutic Conversation Intervention on caregivers of adolescents with ADHD regarding strengthening the supportive role.

Method
The study utilized a quasi-experimental design. The participants (n = 60) were caregivers of adolescents (13-17 years old) with ADHD. The intervention consisted in-group and parent sessions. The Calgary Family Model and the Family Illness Beliefs Model were used as theoretical frameworks.

Results
The study revealed significant differences in the improvement of quality of life; regarding primary caregiver (PC) worry, daily activities, family relationships and collaboration post-intervention, as well emotional functioning at both post-intervention and follow-up. Secondary caregiver (SC) social functioning was significantly improved at follow-up.

Discussion
The intervention proved to be beneficial to the caregivers and is filling a gap in much needed intervention.

Implication for practice
The results will expand health care professionals' knowledge of how to increase PC quality of life when supporting their adolescent with ADHD. This treatment information should improve service at health care centres/hospitals where adolescents with ADHD receive care.