THE STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS
STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES IN TREATING FIRST EPISODE PSYCHOSIS

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BACKGROUND

What is First Episode Psychosis (FEP)?
A First Episode refers to the first time someone experiences psychotic symptoms or a psychotic episode. The symptoms can be highly disturbing and unfamiliar, leaving the person confused and distressed.¹

What is the best treatment for FEP?
Coordinated Specialty Care (CSC) offered early in the course of psychosis increases likelihood of recovery. CSC is a multi-disciplinary model of treatment that is person-centered, recovery-oriented, and promotes shared decision making.²

Who provides FEP treatment in Massachusetts?
• 9 FEP programs in the state of Massachusetts
• Each program has a different approach to treatment!
• 150+ providers who work in a FEP program

Are there any efforts to improve the quality of FEP treatment in Massachusetts?
Yes! The Massachusetts Psychosis Network for Early Treatment (MAPNET) is a Technical Assistance Center founded in 2017 with the goal of training and supporting FEP providers, promoting cross-site collaboration, and offering technical assistance on best practices in FEP treatment.

PURPOSE & METHODS

• To identify strengths and weaknesses in providing EBPs for FEP — on an individual and on a team level
• To inform the curriculum of MAPNET
• To assess the effectiveness of MAPNET trainings

1. MAPNET staff developed an anonymous survey
2. Respondents were asked to rank their ability to provide each EBP for FEP on a scale of ☑️- ☐️ (1–5).
3. Survey was administered to 38 providers from 5 different FEP programs.

RESULTS

Self-assessed strengths in FEP treatment:

- INDIVIDUAL THERAPY
- DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSIS
- MEDICATION MANAGEMENT

Self-assessed weaknesses in FEP treatment:

- COGNITIVE ENHANCEMENT
- PEER COUNSELING
- EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT

Interrater Reliability (IRR):

<table>
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<th>FEP Program</th>
<th>IRR</th>
<th>P-value</th>
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<tbody>
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DISCUSSION

• The most important components of FEP treatment are our strengths, Self-assessed areas of strength are also the EBPs with the strongest empirical support for effectiveness in FEP treatment.

• The ‘emerging practices’ in FEP treatment are close to our weaknesses, Education and employment services and cognitive enhancement therapy have empirical support for effectiveness in FEP treatment, but these EBPs are weaknesses amongst FEP providers in Massachusetts. MAPNET has focused our efforts on education and employment services over the past year.

• Interrater reliability on FEP programs is generally high. One explanation for fair interrater reliability is that surveys were completed by clinical and non-clinical staff on the FEP program. High interrater reliability is important, as it indicates that all members of the FEP team understand and support the program mission as well as its strengths and areas of growth.

REFERENCES


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