

IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY INTERVENTIONS IN REDUCING THE IMPACT OF THE ILLNESS ON THE PATIENTS WITH PSYCHIATRIC CONDITIONS

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People with mental illnesses are marginalized and socially excluded from many aspects of community life. Mentally ill patients and their family members/caregivers often face significant barriers when dealing with their illnesses. The goal of this study is to identify the factors affecting re-hospitalization and types of care given by the families.

A sample of 20 psychiatric patients (Male-10, Female-10) admitted to the National Institute of Mental Health, Angoda, Sri Lanka, from the Colombo Urban area were selected for this study. Primary data were obtained using semi-structured questionnaires, in-depth interviews (patients and caregivers). Information from hospital records and observations and case studies were used as secondary information.

Patients were identified with supportive caregivers through the follow up. Case work activities revealed that, family members were aware of patients' illness behavior and psycho-social changes. They took responsibility to visit hospital and clinics. Counseling sessions helped them to reduce their burden. Patients were improved their self care. 03 patients started to do jobs with treatment. Sixteen patients were receiving regular medication for their illness increase attendance at vocational therapy activities. Family interventions were very much evident and proved to be very effective in reducing the impact of the illness on the patient and the family.