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CASE REPORT ARTICLE

APPLICATION OF GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY IN A CAPS III AND IN A PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL: AN EXPERIENCE REPORT

APLICAÇÃO DE PSICOTERAPIA DE GRUPO EM UM CAPS III E HOSPITAL PSIQUIÁTRICO: RELATO DE EXPERIÊNCIA

APLICACIÓN DE PSICOTERAPIA DE GRUPO EN UN CAPS III Y HOSPITAL PSIQUIÁTRICO: RELATO DE EXPERIENCIA

Aíka Barros Barbosa Maia¹, Aílka Barros Barbosa², Maria Nauside Pessoa da Silva³, Layane Mayara Gomes Castelo Branco⁴, Milena Valdinéia da Silva Leal⁵, Teresa Marly Teles de Carvalho Melo⁶

ABSTRACT

Objective: to report a proposal for implementing group psychotherapy in a Psychosocial Care Center (CAPS III) and a psychiatric hospital. **Method:** a descriptive, exploratory study, with an experience report design, was conducted by a group of students taking an internship on Mental Health for the nursing undergraduate program of a public university of the state of Piauí (PI), Brazil. **Results:** it was possible to report nurses' performance in the use of therapeutic groups, as well as behavioral responses of patients and the group integration; also, it was observed that the meeting represents a time when patients feel comfortable to express their thoughts and even discuss the approached themes. The CAPS III presented a more appropriate environment than the psychiatric hospital for the implementation of therapeutic groups. **Conclusion:** group therapy contributes significantly to the treatment of individuals, meeting their psychosocial needs. **Descriptors:** Nursing; Mental Health; Group Psychotherapy.

RESUMO

Objetivo: relatar os resultados da proposta da aplicação de psicoterapia de grupo em um Centro de Atenção Psicossocial (CAPS III) e hospital psiquiátrico. **Método:** estudo descritivo, tipo relato de experiência, de caráter exploratório e descritivo, realizado por um grupo de alunos do estágio da disciplina Saúde Mental do Curso de Graduação em Enfermagem de uma universidade pública do Estado do Piauí (PI), Brasil. **Resultados:** foi possível relatar a assistência do enfermeiro na utilização de grupos terapêuticos, além das respostas comportamentais dos pacientes e a integração grupal entre eles, percebe-se que a reunião é o momento em que os pacientes se sentem à vontade para se expressar e até discutir temas abordados. Por outro lado, identificou-se que o CAPS III possui um ambiente mais apropriado que o hospital psiquiátrico para a realização de grupos terapêuticos. **Conclusão:** a terapia grupal contribui significativamente para o tratamento do indivíduo no atendimento de suas necessidades psicossociais. **Descritores:** Enfermagem; Saúde Mental; Psicoterapia de Grupo.

RESUMEN

Objetivo: informar sobre la propuesta de aplicación de psicoterapia de grupo en un Centro de Atención Psicossocial (CAPS III) y hospital psiquiátrico. **Método:** estudio descriptivo, tipo relato de experiencia, de carácter exploratorio y descriptivo, realizado por grupo de alumnos pasantes de la disciplina Salud Mental del Curso de Grado en Enfermería de universidad pública del Estado de Piauí (PI), Brasil. **Resultados:** fue posible relatar la atención del enfermero en la aplicación de grupos terapéuticos, además de las respuestas conductuales de los pacientes y su integración grupal entre sí; se percibe que en la reunión los pacientes se sienten a gusto para expresarse y hasta discutir temas abordados. Por otra parte, se identificó que el CAPS III constituye un ambiente más apropiado que el hospital psiquiátrico para la realización de grupos terapéuticos. **Conclusión:** la terapia grupal contribuye significativamente al tratamiento del individuo en la atención de sus necesidades psicossociales. **Descriptor:** Enfermería; Salud Mental; Psicoterapia de Grupo.

¹Nurse. Specialist in Health Management. Specialist in Family Health. Master's student in Nursing Innovation and Technology - UNIFOR, Professor at UESPI and SENAC. Teresina (PI), Brazil. Email: aikabarbosa@yahoo.com.br; ²Physical therapist, Specialist Professor of Osteopathy, National Service for Commercial Apprenticeship/SENAC. Teresina (PI), Brazil. Email: aílka_barbosa@hotmail.com; ³Nurse, Theologian, Master Professor in Family Health, PhD student in Biomedical Engineering and in Health Biotechnology, Faculdade Evangélica do Piauí, Faculdade Maurício de Nassau, Faculdade IESM. Teresina (PI), Brazil. Email: nauside@yahoo.com.br; ⁴Nurse, Specialist in Urgent and Emergency Care Services, Professor at CEEPS/SEDUC, MBA in Health Services Audit. Master's student in Nursing Innovation and Technology - UNIFOR Unimed's Auditor. Teresina (PI), Brazil. Email: layanemayara@hotmail.com; ⁵Nurse, Master's Degree in Family Health, PhD student in Biomedical Engineering. Teresina (PI), Brazil. Email: milenaleal@bol.com.br; ⁶Dental Surgeon, Master's Degree in Family Health, PhD in Biomedical Engineering. Teresina (PI), Brazil. Email: hryramelo@yahoo.com.br

INTRODUCTION

Mental health used to be often virtually institutionalized, with the exclusion of patients as psychiatric patients were admitted in asylums to treat their disease. However, this action often resulted in absence of social interaction.¹ With the advent of the psychiatric reform and human rights these patients began to be seen as citizens that despite their limitations also have rights and duties.²

Currently, psychosocial rehabilitation is seen as a process aimed at restructuring the life of individuals affected by a mental disorder. This rehabilitation should consider aspects of the patients' lives and work on the development of their autonomy to manage their lives with dignity and citizenship, as well as providing them with leisure and support in the crisis coping processes.³

Therapeutic groups that perform occupational therapy provide support to the improvement of patients with mental disorders. The proposal is related to improving and restoring physical, mental, and social skills of patients in activities of daily living, including leisure and work. The therapy consists in meetings with groups of people to perform activities that provide a reflection on certain themes, allowing the creation of a sharing and support network among the participants by means of the "doing together".⁴

These groups may be implemented in several institutions such as psychosocial care centers (CAPS), psychiatric hospitals, and long-term care institutions, presenting various types of interaction, such as motor (sports, woodwork, leatherwork), social (parties, celebrations, walks), and self-expressive activities (painting, dancing, music therapy, reflection), that vary according to the chosen theme. They may be specific or non-specific as regards occupational therapy.⁵⁻⁶

The groups may be open or closed. Open groups are characterized by patients' turnover as they allow the inclusion of new members. On the other hand, closed groups allow the possibility of creating bonds in an environment of trust and affection, enabling a faster achievement of the expected outcomes.⁷

In view of the above, the objective of this study was to report a proposal for implementing group psychotherapy in a psychosocial care center (CAPS III) and in a psychiatric hospital.

METHOD

A descriptive study, with an experience report design, was conducted by a group of students of the mental health internship of the nursing undergraduate program of a public university of the state of Piauí, between October and December 2014.

The place chosen for the implementation of the activities was the reference psychiatric hospital of the state of Piauí and the CAPS III of the state. Seven therapeutic group activities were conducted: three in the psychiatric hospital, three in the CAPS III, and one walking activity with the CAPS group in the shopping center of the city of Teresina.

The group activities were coordinated in a planned way and subsequently discussed by the internship group, looking for those presenting the best level of adequacy to the limitation of the patients. Patients of the hospital were selected through the criterion of not being patients hospitalized by court order, presenting a stable mood after the nursing evaluation, and belonging to the hospitalization unit Mariano Castelo Branco. For the CAPS III, the participation of users in the therapeutic group was based on free demand.

The group dynamics technique was used, consisting in placing a group of people in movement by means of games and exercises in which the participants may be authentic, seeking for improvement of their behavior in a situation of self-evaluation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

♦ Psychiatric hospital

The initial activities of the therapy were conducted in the psychiatric hospital, with a focus on the mental treatment of patients admitted under events of psychiatric crises, regardless of their etiology, coming from referral or free search (usually family members seek for support directly or via SAMU). First, the patients are screened at the emergency medical service and may then be referred to hospitalization at the hospital or be discharged, or they may be referred to the appropriate CAPS.

One of the treatment methods in use in the hospital is occupational therapy, which develops a patient-seeking selection that fits the aims of the study. Patients presenting a stable mood and no subsequent risk to the physical integrity of the patients and the nursing students were selected; patients hospitalized by court order were excluded.

Occupational therapy was found to be effective and efficient in the process of deinstitutionalization of patients as it provides strengthening of bonds and restoration of the identity affected by the institutionalization process. The therapy is based on group activities characterized as therapeutic workshops by the prioritization of the activity as an opportunity to promote autonomy and social participation.⁸

The results of the therapeutic group in the hospital environment differed from the expected; patients were undergoing crisis treatment related to various mental disorders and their environment was considered as disturbing by the team. Music therapy was conducted during the activity on the occasion of the first group meeting; the participants were found to be dispersed. However, it was observed that they could have a good time, expressing feelings such as “good sadness”, and “I am happy when I sing”. Presence of spirituality was observed, as well as the desire to overcome the disease and resume their lives.

The second day of therapy was the most productive one. The therapy consisted in placing a mirror inside a hat and asking them to report the person they were seeing (themselves); the patients were then less dispersed, and provided good considerations on themselves. This activity aims at reporting on themselves, as well as recognizing their own self-image and the existence of the patient as an individual in society.

On the same day, after the plan to complement this therapy, the following activity was conducted: a chocolate was placed in a box containing a note with a challenge written on it; while a song was played, the closed box was passed from hand to hand, and the person who was holding the box when the song stopped had to decide whether or not they would perform the challenge; on the note it was written: “eat the chocolate”. The activity aimed at opening ideas in relation to challenges. A satisfactory participation was observed among the participants.

From this perspective, the study points out the importance of conducting a new intervention in the care provided to this population within the hospital environment based on changing the passive position of the patient before the team, taking a participative and active position in the experimentation of health and disease processes as well as in therapeutic procedures.⁹

◆ At the CAPS III

The psychiatric reform provided significant changes in relation to mental health care in Brazil, enabling the replacement of the hospital-centered model by a model that focuses on re-inserting the individual with mental disorders in the community. Therefore, services to substitute hospitalization in psychiatric hospitals were created.

Psychosocial care centers (CAPS) consist in a treatment strategy promoted by the public health in Brazil specialized in the treatment of continuing care patients. The CAPS were developed in order to enable the social reintegration of patients with mental disorders, helping them return to their communities. The modality of care may be intensive, semi-intensive, or non-intensive, depending on individual needs; users may attend the CAPS on a daily basis, three times a week, or three times a month, respectively.¹⁰

In this therapeutic center, we found psychically controlled patients presenting the same difficulties observed in the psychiatric hospital. Patients volunteered for the therapy and the same therapies of the second day in the psychiatric hospital were applied, pointing out a better level of adherence and participation of the group of patients of the CAPS in comparison to the group of the hospital.

A third therapy was applied. In this activity, an evaluation of the cognitive functions for expression of feelings was conducted; several pieces of papers were placed with the words AFFECTION, PEACE, LOVE, and FRIENDSHIP, in Portuguese. This provided a pleasant and relaxed atmosphere, presenting considerable freedom of speech and differing the condition of being sick from the condition of being insane. After the execution of the activities, the outcome of this practice was discussed, evidencing some difficulties such as selecting patients that fit the application of the activity and adherence by all the patients to the therapy developed in the CAPS, as they were free to choose which therapies they wanted to take part.

A similar study conducted in the state of Paraná with patients attending the CAPS applied occupational therapy to the users of this center and found promising results, as these patients presented increased self-perception and reflection on the mental disorder, shared their experiences, and solved problems related to occupational

performance, obtaining motivation to behave as a citizen outside the institution.¹¹

It is important to point out a distinction in the application of occupational therapy in different areas. Patients of the hospital did not achieve the goals proposed in the dynamics; in turn, users of the CAPS were able to consider the practice proposed by the dynamics, thus achieving better results in the development of group dynamics.

CONCLUSION

Mental disorders still represent a challenge for psychiatry, particularly due to the difficulty to identify the most appropriate treatment for each situation. All this concern comes from a number of reforms aiming at the improvement of multidisciplinary services, especially nursing, as it supports well-being and comprehensive care to these patients.

In order to achieve the expected results, a methodology of application in the nursing practice of major psychotherapeutic care centers was used based on empirical experimentation of the developed therapies. This research method provides a more consolidated and appropriate learning for the trainees, as well as the application of the appropriate therapy to each patient group in their place of treatment.

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Corresponding Address

Maria Nauside Pessoa da Silva
Rua Padre Áureo Oliveira, 1964
Cristo Rei
CEP: 64015 -470 — Teresina (PI), Brazil