Title: Mechanisms of Change in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for Psychosis (CBTp): Who Benefits Most and Why?

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Abstract: Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) is a form of talk therapy that uses strategies to help people challenge their thinking and behaviour to improve their mental health. CBT has been successful in treating a variety of mental health concerns, including people who have severe and ongoing mental health difficulties, such as seeing or hearing things that are not actually there. These symptoms are common for people who have a condition called psychosis, and the longer these symptoms go untreated, the harder it can be for people to fully recover. Although it was previously believed that medication was the only treatment for psychosis, research has shown that medication does not always work and can also lead to negative side effects, which may explain why many people with psychosis stop taking their medication altogether. A type of CBT has been created specifically to treat psychosis (CBTp) and it has been shown to be moderately effective in reducing the distress and impairment associated with symptoms. Despite the fact that CBTp is a promising form of treatment, we still do not know who will benefit most from CBTp, and why. Recently, there has been a push to offer treatments other than medication to people with psychosis, such as CBTp. In fact, healthcare guidelines in Ontario say that all people with psychosis should be provided CBTp. The goal of this research project is to understand what makes CBTp an effective treatment. Our study participants will be people with psychosis who are currently receiving CBTp in the CAMH Complex Care and Recovery Program. The findings from this study could be used to help make CBTp a more effective intervention by helping clinicians determine who is most appropriate for CBTp, and whether we can improve the treatment for a larger group of people with psychosis.

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