

## **FAMILY BURDEN-FOCUSED PSYCHOSOCIAL THERAPY WITH PARENTS AND SOCIAL FUNCTIONING OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS WITH SCHIZOPHRENIC SPECTRUM DISORDERS**

*E. Koren, T. Kupriyanova*

Moscow Research Institute of Psychiatry, Moscow, Russia

**Introduction:** Family burden is considered to be an integrated psychosocial parameter negatively impacting on symptom levels, social functioning and outcomes of children and adolescents with schizophrenic spectrum disorders, and specific measures directly aimed at lessening the burden of these families should be developed.

**Objective:** To assess the influence of burden-focused group therapy (BFGT) with parents on social functioning of children and adolescents with schizophrenic spectrum disorders.

**Methods:** Parents of 126 children with administered standard antipsychotic therapy (aged 8 - 17 years) were recruited into this study. Parents were assigned to eight 90-minutes "module" structured sessions carried out in groups (8 - 9 members) and received a systematic assessment using CGSQ and CGAS at entry and after 1, 3 and 6 month.

**Results:** Reciprocal effect with negative correlation ( $r=-0.463$ ,  $P=0.005$ ) between family burden indicators and children's total levels of functioning was established. BFGT did significantly affect family burden and correlated with positive changes in overall levels of social functioning of children using CGAS ( $p < 0,05$ ). The largest decline was noted in Subjective burden (from 4.98 to 3.75).

**Conclusions:** BFGT aimed at managing family burden and improving children's social functioning proved to be one of key components of the psychosocial treatment and rehabilitation of children and adolescents with schizophrenic spectrum disorders in the context of increasing rehabilitation resource of their families. Further controlled studies are required to strengthen the evidence base for effective management of family burden.