FEASIBILITY, ACCEPTABILITY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF COLLABORATION BETWEEN COMPLEMENTARY AND CONVENTIONAL HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS IN THE CARE OF PEOPLE WITH PSYCHOSIS

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Objectives:

To explore the views of trial participants about the process and experience of collaboration in caring for people with psychosis

Background:

Complementary health care providers account for majority of health service providers in low and middle income countries. Previous efforts to integrate them into mainstream health manpower had brought up unanswered questions including feasibility of working with conventional providers. The experience of participants in a trial of shared care in treating patients with psychosis will help in answering some of these lingering questions

Materials and Methods:

Qualitative study design with key informant interviews were conducted with patients (n=20), caregivers (n=20), Complementary (n=16) and conventional providers (n=15) nine months into the trial. The interviews were conducted using an interview guide with every session tape recorded and transcribed verbatim. The transcripts were analysed with central themes identified and coded.

Results:

The mean age in years (SD) of the patients, caregivers, complementary and conventional providers were 34.2 (9.9), 53.0 (15.2), 46.9 (8.3) and 45.9 (4.9) respectively. Patients and caregivers are of the view that the collaboration made treatment more effective as the “patients get better quickly” and “it made life easier”. The Providers reported that the collaboration was beneficial to the patients. The complementary providers believed collaboration enhanced their status and made treatment more effective. The providers identified a barrier of initial mistrust from their counterparts which once addressed gave way to fruitful collaboration and mutual respect.

Conclusion

Despite initial mistrust resulting from mistrust of one another, collaboration between conventional primary health care providers and complementary health care providers was acceptable to the health care workers and adjudged to be mutually beneficial. Patients also reported favorable experience in being cared for by both groups of health workers working together.

1. WHO Traditional Medicine Strategy 2014–2023. Geneva:World Health Organization, 2013
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