

Motivational interviewing on medication adherence: a mixed methods study of active ingredients and patient-therapist interaction in patients with schizophrenia

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Aim To find out which active ingredients appear and whether these ingredients activate mechanisms of change in motivational interviewing (MI) for medication adherence in patients with schizophrenia.

Methods We analysed the cases of 14 patients, comprising 66 MI-sessions. For the qualitative analysis, we used the methodology of Multiple case study analysis, to explore the active ingredients and the mechanisms of change in the MI-sessions. For the quantitative analysis, we used sequential analysis to assess the transitional probabilities between therapist use of MI-techniques and subsequent patient reactions.

Results We observed a variation of factors which seemed to contribute to the active ingredients. Most prevalent was (eliciting) 'change talk', but also factors such as 'experiencing competency' and 'changing sense making'. Since mechanisms of change refer to psychological processes within the patient's mind, it is impossible to observe these. But we recognised clues for mechanisms of change, the most prevalent mechanism was 'arguing oneself into change'. The most important conversational techniques are reflections and questions addressing medication adherent behaviour or intentions, which was often (in 74% and 69% of the time respectively) followed by change talk.

Conclusions Active ingredients of MI seem to consist of a sufficient combination of factors, to which both patient and therapist contribute. This combination may act as an active ingredient and can trigger mechanisms of change. Our study suggests that in particular the patient factors are a pool of factors from which, after proper activation by therapist factors, different combinations can form active ingredients.