

The Adaptation and Evaluation of a Psychoeducational Program for Patients with Depression in General Practices in Germany

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Abstract : People with depressive symptoms often first consult a General Practitioner (GP) before making use of other treatment options. The present study shows the adaptation and evaluation of a psychoeducational program for patients with depressive symptoms that are treated by GPs in Bavaria, Germany. The adaptation of an existing psychoeducational program, that is used in inpatient psychiatric settings, was performed in exchange with experts (psychotherapists, general practitioners, and a patient representative). As a result, a program consisting of 4 psychoeducational sessions was developed, which is carried out in individual settings in GP practices by the practitioners themselves. This program will be compared to treatment as usual that patients with depression receive by GPs. Data is collected at 3 measurement points (baseline, 3-months-follow-up, 6-months-follow-up) using different questionnaires (BDI-II, D-Lit-R German, FERUS, PAM13-D, PHQ-9, GAD-7, PHQ-15, PC-PTSD-5). In addition to the change in depressive symptoms, changes in depression knowledge, self-efficacy, and patient activation will be analyzed, and the feasibility of the program and the subjective benefit for GPs and patients will be assessed. By now, 84 patients have been recruited by 20 cluster-randomized GP practices, with 73.5% of the participants being female and 26.5% being males. The average age was $M= 50.1$ ($SD= 14.67$) years. The change in depression symptoms over the 3-month period will be compared between the two study conditions by using a linear mixed model by the end of data collection (December 2023). The subjective benefit for the patients and GPs will be assessed via feedback questionnaires. Results will be presentable by the beginning of 2024 and will provide indications for further development and barriers to the implementation of such a program for GP practices.

Keywords : depression, general practice, psychoeducation, primary care

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