

ABSTRACTS

OPENING SESSION

THIRTY YEARS OF WHO EXPERIENCE IN DEVELOPING
INSTRUMENTS FOR PSYCHIATRIC RESEARCH. N. Sartorius,
Department of Psychiatry, University of Geneva, Boulevard de la Cluse 51,
1205 Geneva, Switzerland

The presentation includes a description of the instruments developed in WHO collaborative projects and summarizes the experience obtained in producing them. Problems encountered in establishing the equivalence of instruments in different languages and ways of overcoming them are described. The paper also lists some of the instruments which are necessary for comparative research but currently receive insufficient attention in international research. These include instruments for the assessment of changes of quality of life in the treatment process; instruments suitable for the assessment of satisfaction of the health workers and clients seeking help from them; instruments for the assessment of family mental health and of community tolerance for mental illness and abnormality; and instruments - or indicators - for the measurement of total cost and benefit of care, for the individuals, their communities and societies.

TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF INSTRUMENT DEVELOPMENT

Graham Dunn

Department of Biostatistics and Computing
Institute of Psychiatry, London, U.K.

This talk will provide a brief review of methods of assessing the reliability of rating scales with particular reference to the Camberwell Assessment of Needs (CAN). Aspects of reliability to be included are internal consistency, agreement between raters, and temporal stability. The potential of confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modelling in the validation of rating scales will be highlighted.

INTRODUCTION TO THE THEMES

Presenting Author: Dr Graham Thornicroft
Institution: Institute of Psychiatry
Department: PRISM (Psychiatric Research in Service Measurement)
Full address: De Crespigny Park, Denmark Hill
Postal code and Town: London SE5 8AF
Country: UK
Telephone Nr: 010 44 71 919 2609
Fax Nr: 010 44 71 277 1462

For Oral Presentation

Abstract:

Needs: Concepts, definition and operationalisation.

This paper will develop the following issues. How do you understand the concept of needs? Why is this area of research important? What definitions of need are useful and how can we distinguish need from want, demand, supply and utilisation. In relation to serious mental illness, which domains should be included in a comprehensive assessment of need at the individual level? How can need be validated? Whose judgements are required to assess the presence of needs, and which criteria should be used to say when needs are met or unmet?

QUALITY OF LIFE: An introduction

The concept of quality of life has attracted increasing attention over the past thirty years since NASA attempted to investigate the effect of the space programme on the quality of life of US citizens. Attempts to conceptualise and measure quality of life have grown exponentially during the 1980s and 1990s, focusing upon the effects of diverse diseases, such as cancer and heart disease, as well as mental illness.

Several research groups, and the WHO, have developed ideas and instruments for the assessment of the quality of life of mentally ill people, in particular those suffering from long-standing and severe illnesses. The present paper will introduce the concept of quality of life and examine a number of matters of interest to those wishing to consider quality of life assessment in research or service evaluation. Among the questions addressed will be: why use quality of life measures?; what is their potential utility?; what should the content be?; how can the measures be used in research, practice and service evaluation?.

Brief examples, and a summary of issues which might be addressed in future research and service evaluation, will be given.

FAMILY OR CAREGIVER BURDEN: AN INTRODUCTION.

Aart H Schene. Dept. of Psychiatry, Academic Medical Center,
Meibergdreef 9, 1105 AZ Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

In this introductory paper, a short historical review of the research on the consequences of severe mental illness for family members of patients will be given. This history can be divided in different periods, which will be shortly described.

Secondly, the results of a recent review of all the instruments measuring family burden available in English will be shown. The different domains these instruments measure, their country of origine, their length, their time frame, and some information about their psychometrics will be discussed.

Recently models of caregiving have been developed. Some of these will be described and their commonalities will be discussed. The paper will finish with some conclusions, points of discussion, and ideas about research in the near future.

SATISFACTION WITH PSYCHIATRIC SERVICES: WHY AND HOW TO MEASURE IT. Mirella Ruggeri - Department of Medical Psychology - Institute of Psychiatry, University of Verona, Ospedale Policlinico, 37134 Verona - ITALIA

Despite reservations made on its use as a means for evaluating interventions, various findings in the recent literature point to patients' and relatives' satisfaction with psychiatric services as a particularly salient and appropriate outcome and quality measure. Even though in the last decade substantial improvements have occurred, research in the field suffers various methodological limitations regarding the study design, the instruments' construction and the lack of attention to their psychometric properties. In the last few years the need for research that develops and refines measures of client satisfaction and establishes their psychometric properties has been considered a priority in service evaluation by a growing number of authors. In spite of this, in mental health field very few validated instruments for satisfaction measurement are currently available.

Aims of this presentation are: 1. to discuss the theoretical and practical meaning of patients and relatives' satisfaction in both research and clinical practice; 2. to update work done in the field of satisfaction with mental health services in the last decade; 3. to describe the main instruments currently available to measure patients' and relatives' satisfaction with mental health services; 4. to provide guidelines for the future development of instruments and their use in mental health settings. The author will conclude by emphasizing that, in order to make further progresses, considerable effort is needed in developing and spreading the use of validated instruments and discouraging use of *ad hoc* measures. Comparability between studies should be pursued more vigorously in order allow both refinement of existing instruments and better understanding of theoretical and substantive meaning of satisfaction with psychiatric services.

THE HEALTH ECONOMICS DIMENSION: POSSIBILITIES FOR INTERNATIONAL COMPARATIVE RESEARCH. Martin Knapp, Centre for the Economics of Mental Health, Institute of Psychiatry, De Crespigny Park, Denmark Hill, London SE5 8AF, UK.

This presentation will have three aims:

- to summarise very briefly the scope of health economics as relevant to the evaluation of mental health services;
- to introduce one "instrument", the Client Service Receipt Interview (CSRI), which can assist in health economics evaluations and which, in one form or another, is now being used in a number of countries; and
- to describe the different ways in which comparative mental health economics research might move forward.

Although there will be insufficient time to present research findings in any detail, allusions will be made to completed or ongoing research in order to illustrate some of the arguments.