

Title	Efficacy of short-term social and psychological interventions: A systematic review
Agency	INESSS, Institut national d'excellence en santé et en services sociaux 2535 boul. Laurier, 5 ^{ème} étage, Québec, QC G1V 4M3; Tel: 418 643-1339, Fax: 418 646-8349, inesss@inesss.qc.ca , www.inesss.qc.ca
Reference	English summary (PDF) 978-2-550-69502-8 inesss.qc.ca/publications/publications/publication/efficacite-des-interventions-sociales-et-psychologiques-de-courte-duree-revue-systematique.html

Aim

The Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux du Québec (MSSS) asked the Institut national d'excellence en santé et en services sociaux (INESSS) to examine the efficacy and safety of short-term social and psychological interventions (STIs). STIs are defined here solely on the basis of their duration, which generally does not exceed 12 meetings. General social services are the main entry point to health and social services centres (CSSSs) for the population as a whole. Currently, STIs are provided through "social consultation" and "psychological consultation" services to anyone with a social or psychological problem. However, knowledge concerning the types of problems for which STIs are effective is lacking.

Conclusions and results

The analysis of the scientific data, which was supported by contextual information and expert knowledge, clearly indicates that STIs, regardless of the approach used, are slightly to moderately effective in fostering significant changes in individuals with a wide variety of social and psychological problems. INESSS makes certain observations stemming from this analysis.

Methods

Several methods were used to gather scientific and contextual data including the consultation of experts in the area of STIs for social and psychological problems. In addition to using Québec's I-CLSC database and consulting 12 representatives from the professional orders concerned and from agencies/ CSSS management, INESSS conducted a systematic review of 104 references, including 51 reviews of systematic reviews, 51 randomized clinical trials (RCTs) and two expert roundtables. More than half of the articles were from Europe, 38 from the United States and 9 from Canada. Thirty-five of the studies were considered to be of excellent quality, 44 of good quality and 25 of poor quality.

Further research/reviews required

Quality indicators were identified from the articles included in the systematic review and from specialized websites. An exploration of this literature confirmed that STI outcomes are measured mainly from an organizational standpoint. Determining quality indicators for clinical outcomes, and not with regards to intervention processes, is a complex task, which might form the subject of future analysis.

Written by

Annie Tessier, INESSS, Canada