

## **Abstract**

This paper gives the summary of the six-year operations of multi-family therapy programme in eating disorders at The Eating Disorders Centre at The Psychiatric Clinic, Prague. The research done has been the first experience with multi-family treatment of psychiatric patients in the Czech Republic. This therapy concept is often used abroad as a form of work with patients suffering from the diagnosis of eating disorders. It is a „first choice“ method due to NICE Guideline(2004). The inspiration for the Prague team was the London Maudsley model.

The main aims of the research were: 1/ to introduce this therapeutic approach into a complex treatment of patients suffering from eating disorders, optimize the functioning structure and programme and stabilize the therapeutic team and 2/ to evaluate the effectiveness of multi-family treatment and suggest the suitable methodology.

Since 2004 twenty families which form the observed group have been involved in the project. The combination of qualitative and quantitative methodology was chosen during the primary stage of the research. The methods used were: questionnaires of Beck Depression Inventory (BDI), Schwartz scale of therapy assessment (SOS-10), the life quality questionnaire (SQUALA) and Rosenberg self-concept questionnaire (RSE). We evaluated ten different areas in which changes and development were monitored. The ten areas were: quality of life, emotional stability of an individual, presence of PPP symptoms, changes in family eating habits, future foresight, communication within a family, marital satisfaction and harmony, cooperation of members of a family, general atmosphere inside a family, perception of multi-family treatment effect on changes. The changes and development in these areas became the sources for giving answers for five research questions.

We can consider both the aims to have met with success. The complex structure with particular programme, method of organization and communication with families has been formed. The therapeutic team is stable and regularly supervised. The multi-family therapy has entered the general public and experts minds as an one of effective ways of eating disorders treatment. The changes and development in areas assessed have showed the effectiveness of this programme. The most positive outcome is seen in areas of eating disorder symptoms and emotional stability, particularly in diminishing depression symptoms. There is an obvious general effect on the atmosphere inside a family and the decrease of tense and anxiety about the future. In the area of quality of life significant positive changes have been noticed. The most significant effect of the therapy is that one on the family as a whole. The most positive outcome of the multi-family therapy is seen in families which have undergone the eating disorder treatment trial for the first time. The results of qualitative and quantitative methods were significantly proved by a complex range of therapy assessment SOS-10. In the area of self-esteem significant negative changes were found. It is explained by the loss of identity as patient and security given by the illness. The methodology will be supplemented with the tools used by foreign teams, which will bring a possibility of reciprocal comparison. The conclusions in this paper can be considered as reasons for further both multi-family treatment use and research aims.