

Telephone support for parents in ADHD

Due to its high prevalence, treating ADHD can place a burden on services. Self-help and remote interventions could offer a way to deliver treatment at scale, if they're effective.

Christina Dose and colleagues at the University of Cologne provided telephone counselling to 51 parents of ADHD children who were being treated with the stimulant methylphenidate.

The researchers supplied parents with a series of eight self-help booklets on disruptive behaviour disorder, which often co-occurs with ADHD. Parents were given help applying advice from the booklets during fourteen 30-minute telephone consultations over the course of the programme.

After completing the 12-month programme, the treatment families were compared with 52 control families, who had received only routine clinical care.

Although the researchers found no significant difference in ADHD symptoms or functional impairment between the groups, they found a moderate improvement in oppositional defiant disorder symptoms and negative parenting behaviour in the treated families.

Dose, C., Hautmann, C., Buerger, M., Schuermann, S., Woitecki, K. and Doepfner, M. (2017), Telephone-assisted self-help for parents of children with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder who have residual functional impairment despite methylphenidate treatment: a randomized controlled trial. J Child Psychol Psychiatr, 58: 682–690. doi:10.1111/jcpp.12661