

Outcomes Research: re

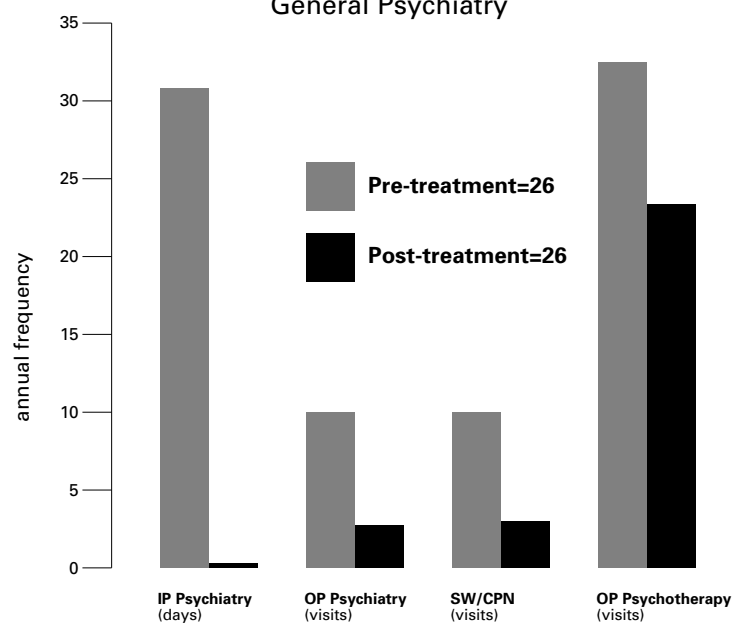
Summary *Two outcomes studies are currently underway at the Cassel Hospital. They are part of an ongoing research programme assessing the clinical and economic benefits of specialised psychosocial treatment offered to the growing population of patients with severe emotional problems (personality disorders).*

Research at the Cassel has considerable financial and administrative support from within Riverside Mental Health Trust as well as from the Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust and NHS regional Research and Development funds. It has also resulted in collaboration with the Psychoanalysis Unit at University College London, the Centre for the Economics of Mental Health and the Biometric Unit at the Institute of Psychiatry.

Early results from the studies suggest both a considerable improvement in patients' symptomatology following inpatient admission and substantial decreases in subsequent utilisation of other health resources.

A comparative examination of two differing treatment programmes has also revealed improved treatment compliance in the sample of single adult patients who enter a two stage programme made up of a shorter inpatient stay followed by outpatient and outreach input.

**Patterns of Service Utilization:
General Psychiatry**



Introduction

The need for psychotherapy and other forms of psychosocial treatment to prove their effectiveness has undoubtedly grown in recent years. Purchasers and referrers want to make sure that their limited resources are used appropriately and that the treatment offered is likely to bring benefit to the patient.

Despite the high cost to the NHS of treating patients with personality disturbance – estimated at £63.1m in 1986 (Smith et al, 1995) – units like the Cassel need to respond positively to requests to justify efficacy.

The Cassel Hospital offers inpatient treatment to subjects suffering from chronic and debilitating personality disorders whose clinical picture include a variety of neurotic symptoms, eating disorders, self mutilations, suicide attempts, chaotic relationships, abuse of medical and psychiatric services and low levels of employment and productivity. The Families Unit also provides treatment for multi-problem families in which sexual and physical abuse has often occurred.

The Studies

Two major studies are ongoing: one evaluating two differing clinical programmes offered to single adult patients; the other examining the use of health service resources before and after inpatient psychosocial treatment.

The former study examines two programmes. The first entailing a one year inpatient stay with no outpatient follow-up, the second a 6 month inpatient stay followed by one year of twice weekly group psychotherapy and 6 months of concurrent outreach nursing.

The one year programme is a lengthier exposure to the therapeutic community milieu while the second relies on a gradual transition back to society, supported by the Cassel. For logistic reasons, patients residing within the Greater London area are offered the two stage treatment.

The second study compares two sets of patients. One group receive inpatient