[A telephone hotline as an easily accessible service for questions on schizophrenia]

Abstract:
Public relations activities of the German Research Network on Schizophrenia (GRNS) have shown that there is a demand for more information about schizophrenia disorder. This confirms international research findings that relatives of schizophrenia patients are particularly in need of information and support. In response, the GRNS has maintained a telephone hotline since 2001. The hotline is manned by clinical experts, psychiatrists, or psychologists once a week. The telephone calls are documented in a systematic manner. From 2001 to 2003, 3,909 calls were registered. This volume exceeds the limit of the hotline's resources. The telephone hotline is mainly used by relatives of psychotic patients. Most questions relate to the symptoms of schizophrenia and pharmaceutical treatment. The need for emotional support is also a high motivational factor for dialing the hotline number. The telephone hotline seems to be a worthwhile addition to the already existing crisis telephones and should be maintained even after public funding of the network expires.

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