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Effectiveness of one year pharmacotherapy of adults with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD): An open-label prospective study of treatment time, dose, side-effects and comorbidity

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The aim of this study was to examine clinical relevance of long-term medication of adult ADHD. Electronic databases reviewed for original studies of long-term pharmacotherapy suggested that medication leads to less symptoms and higher functional outcomes compared to non-treatment and was well tolerated. However, the literature was scarce and had limitations in generalizing the outcome to the ADHD patients in general. The original studies of the thesis were conducted on 250 medication-naïve adult ADHD-patients at a specialized outpatient clinic. Higher levels of childhood hyperactive-impulsive symptoms and overall severity of ADHD-symptoms were associated with educational failure. Persisting inattentive symptoms and co-morbid mental disorders in adulthood were related to long term work disability. In the observational prospective part of the clinical study patients were treated with current ADHD-medication. At 12-months follow-up 232 patients completed examination, and 70% persisted on medication. Sustained improvement of symptoms and functioning were related to continued medication. Co-morbid mental disorders and side-effects were related to lower effectiveness and adherence. Hyperactive-impulsive ADHD-symptoms and severity of ADHD-symptoms in childhood was related to not having completed secondary school. Sustained attention difficulties in adulthood and comorbidity of psychiatric disorders were related to long-term work incapacity. Maintained use of ADHD medications was associated with significant reduction of ADHD-symptoms, improvement in general functioning and psychological symptoms. No serious adverse events were recorded.

Biography

Dawn Peleikis in 1994, started as a resident in psychiatry. She became an authorized psychiatrist in 1999. She completed her education in psychotherapy at the Norwegian Institute of Psychotherapy. In 2000-2004, she did her PhD work and her dissertation was on "Women who were sexually abused as children: Aspects and functioning after therapy". From 2005 she worked both on clinical and research associated to Department of Research and Development, Department of Psychiatry, Akershus University Hospital. Her topics of research have been: trauma/PTSD, Schizophrenia and ADHD. She was the main supervisor in the PhD work of MD Fredriksen and is doing effectiveness study on adult ADHD-patients.

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