

Information points for House Human Services Committee

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In recent studies, anti-psychotic drugs are modestly effective.

Recent study by Leucht of newer anti-psychotic drugs, Number Needed to Treat=6 (this means that it takes for every 6 people given the drug, one will have a positive response).

41% response with drug vs 24% response with placebo

More people in hospital are on drugs that are not helping than are refusing drugs that would reduce symptoms.

Anti-psychotic drugs cause apathy, loss of drive, fatigue.

In the short run, this may give some relief from overwhelming voices, delusional thoughts, and agitation.

But this may be accompanied by a extremely uncomfortable sensations along with motor effects (tremor, muscle spasm), weight gain, fatigue.

Over years, this loss of volition appears to have a negative impact on recovery.

There are a number of interventions which can be helpful to treat psychosis

Open Dialogue is an approach developed in Finland where drugs are avoided.

Their outcomes at five years are outstanding: only 19% of people are on disability.

Hearing Voices movement

This is an international movement in which voices hearers work together to make sense of and learn to manage their voices

Cognitive behavioral therapy and other psychotherapies

Can be effective for psychosis

Psychiatric diagnosis is not precise

We do not know, a priori, who will respond to non-pharmacologic approaches.

It can take time to figure this out.

There is *not* strong evidence to support the hypothesis that delaying the use of antipsychotic drugs worsens outcome.

We want to find a way to work *with* people to help resolve their crisis.

Forcing drugs may irrevocably alienate them from the people who are trying to be of help.