Impact of Comorbid Diabetes on Functioning in People with Schizophrenia

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Use of conventional and atypical antipsychotics in persons with schizophrenia has been associated with increased risk of developing type II diabetes. We studied the potential link between comorbid diabetes and functional status in these patients.

Methods: In June 2002, 850 people with schizophrenia, identified through NAMI and CMHCs, completed self-administered questionnaires. Of these, 109 had diabetes. Individuals were asked how many hours/week they typically engaged in paid employment, volunteer work, or school/college work. Persons who participated in at least one of these activities were considered to participate in productive activity. Gender, age, and race were controlled using multiple regression analysis for hours per week of productive activity and logistic regression analysis for participation in productive activity.

Results: Compared with those with diabetes, respondents without diabetes were 1.97 (P<0.002) times as likely to participate in a productive activity. Paid employment was 2.57 (P<0.001) times more likely; volunteer work, 1.56 (P<0.001) times more likely; and school/college work, 7.32 (P<0.001) times more likely. Respondents without diabetes averaged 12.41 (P<0.001) more hours per week of productive activity than those with diabetes.

Conclusions: Among persons with schizophrenia, comorbid diabetes has a negative impact on functioning as measured by engagement in productive activities.