Using Medication to Manage Behaviour Problems in Adults with a Learning Disability:

A Guide

Professor Shoumitro Deb
FRCPsych, MD
University of Birmingham

PSYCHOTROPICS FOR PEOPLE WITH LD

- 20-50%

- Same in institutions and in the community

- 36% without a psychiatric diagnosis

PI in learning disability

Diagnosis	Deb et al (ICD-10)	Meltzer et al (ICD-10)
Total	14.4%	16%
Psychosis	5.5%	0.4%*
Depression	2.2%	2.1%
Bipolar Dis.	0	0
Neurotic Dis.	6.6%	6.2%

Behaviour disorders in LD

Diagnosis	Deb et al	Smith et al
Total	60.4%	64%
Aggression	23%	21.6%
SIB	24%	17.4%
Destructive	12%	17.2%
Overactive	26%	14.3%*
Screaming	29%	22%

NICE GUIDELINE DEVELOPMENT STAGES

- Defining questions
- Refining the subject
- Identifying the evidence
- Assessing and synthesising the evidence
- Translating the evidence into recommendation for practice
- Audit
- External review

NICE GUIDELINE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

- Scope
- GDG
- Stakeholder groups
- Systematic review
- 3 versions of the guide
- RCPsych LD Faculty
- Multi-centre audit
- LD Faculty questionnaire survey

SCOPE

- Age 18 years and over
- Intellectual/ learning disability
- Behaviour problems
- Drugs and diets/ vitamins
- Evidence-based
- Possibility of gathering a consensus-base
- All settings where drugs may be used
- All involved in the care of these people

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- Assessment & formulation
- Input from the service users and/ or carers
- Interdisciplinary input
- When to consider medication
- Monitoring
- Prescribing within Person Centred Planning
- Who should prescribe
- Communication issues
- Capacity & consent issues
- Legal issues

ASSESSMENT AND FORMULATION

- Behaviour (causes & consequences)
- The Person
- Medical
- Psychological
- Social
- Risk factors
- Risk assessment
- Consideration of all management options
- Desired & non-desired effects of the intervention

Service users'/ carers' involvement

- As active partners
- Use accessible language
- Take time/ be innovative
- Hand over accessible written information
- Identify a key person for implementation
- Licensing status
- Pros and cons of the intervention

INTERDISCIPLINARY WORKING

- At all stages (start, monitor, withdraw)
- Resource/ practical issues
- Speech therapists/ clinical psychologists/ nurses/ pharmacists/ social workers/ GPs
- Help with alternative management
- Help with the medication management
- Help to reach a consensus

When to consider medication

- Risk/ harm/ distress to self/ others/ property
- Failure of other interventions
- Success of medicinal intervention before
- Underlying mental disorders/ anxiety/ ASD/ ADHD etc.
- As an adjunct to other measures
- Person/ carer choice
- Severe consequences of the behaviour

- Which medication for which behaviour?

MONITORING

- Effectiveness
- Adverse effects
- Use of objective measures
- Key person to collate data & communicate
- Time and place for follow up
- Who should attend follow up
- Consider non-medication management
- Consider withdrawal of medication

MONITORING (Special issues)

- Poly prescribing
- High dose medication
- IM medication
- Rapid tranquillisation
- As required (PRN) prescribing
- Administration of medication (ARC)

MONITORING/ WITHDRAWAL

- Factors to consider
- Factors determining the rate of withdrawal
- Relapse plan
- Monitor
- Alternative management
- When to hand over to the primary care
- Primary care monitoring

PERSON CENTRED PLANNING

- PCP
- HAP
- Care Plan
- Care Programme Approach

Who should prescribe

- Doctors
  - GPs
  - General adult psychiatrists
  - Psychiatrists working in the LD services
  - Other psychiatrists
  - Consultant/ non-consultant grades
- Pharmacists
- Nurses

- Referral pathways

COMMUNICATION ISSUES

- On a need to know basis
- Service users/ carers providing information
- Prescribers providing information
- Sample clinic letter
- Written short/ long term treatment plan
- Leaflets on pros & cons (accessible version)
- Key person to coordinate all information
- Update quickly on any changes

CAPACITY AND CONSENT

- Must be tested
- Take time
- Take others' advice if necessary
- Use accessible information
- Document
- Best interests principles where applicable

- Other legal issues/ Mental Health Act etc.

OTHER ISSUES

- Implementation
- Dissemination
- Main recommendations
- Audit criteria
- AGREE criteria
- LD faculty questionnaire data
- Multi-centre audit