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International experience in organizing psychological counseling for rural adolescents

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Abstract

Objective. The aim is to generalize the international experience of counseling via telemedicine tools to identify opportunities and constraints of using these tools in practice, the availability of psychological assistance to adolescents who live in rural areas. **Methodology.** The paper used the methods of generalization and systematization of existing research (international experience) in the field of telemedicine tools. **Results.** The study shows that adolescents with psychological problems, rural environment tend to affect adversely, while it is for this social group, psychological help is available to a lesser extent. It was found that a restriction such assistance relates primarily lack of anonymity, developed culture of psychological self-help, strengthening the social stigma of mental illness in rural society than in urban areas. Also as a result of the study shows that the most appropriate institutional form of psychological counseling is the access to such services through specialized counseling services, organized in the framework of educational and educational environment of rural school. In addition, on the basis of generalization of experience it has shown that the most effective means of telemedicine is to offer standardized psychological assistance programs, as well as improving the security of personal information through the involvement of experts of regional centers. **Conclusion.** The use of telemedicine tools is a unique tool to support young people with psychological problems and mental disorders in rural areas. Psychological consultation via telemedicine tools in schools is an effective way of availability of teenagers in rural areas to skilled care.

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Keywords

Psychological counseling, adolescents, rural areas, international experience.

Introduction

In the modern literature, using the example of the experience of the EU countries, the USA and Australia, it was determined that there are significant difficulties in the availability of psychological assistance to adolescents in rural areas compared to urban areas. Understanding these barriers in providing assistance to adolescents is a very significant scientific problem for Russia as well. In addition, in our country, even for those living in urban areas, psychological assistance is provided by a very limited circle of specialists, mainly school psychologists and support services (helplines, etc.). Support groups as an institutional form are undeveloped, as is psychotherapeutic assistance to the population. At the same time, a significant number of studies have shown that it is in adolescence that the availability of psychological assistance is most significant for the formation of a personality. In addition, the lack of specialist help during this period can lead to very serious diseases (disorders) in the future. Therefore, the formation of an effective institutional form of psychological counseling in the future should be one of the priorities for the development of education and health care in rural areas.

Despite the fact that adolescents prefer to receive psychological assistance from informal sources, in particular, such as support from friends and relatives, studies show that the main characteristics for a teenager are an open-minded attitude to his problems, understanding the problems of adolescence and accepting them as significant and significant, and, of course, the availability of such assistance services. At the same time, the main limitations are the unavailability of psychological services or the high employment of a specialist. Thus, the topic of the development of new institutional forms of psychological counseling of adolescents in rural areas is one of the important areas of research.

International experience: theory and practice

Research in the field of psychological counseling of adolescents can be divided into a number of thematic blocks:

1) research in the field of generalization of the practice of psychological counseling of adolescents [Boyd, Aisbett, Francis, Kelly, Newnham, Newnham, 2006; Coyne, 2015];

2) work in the field of institutional forms of psychological counseling for rural adolescents [Gulliver, Griffiths, Christensen, 2012; Hickie, Groom, 2002];

3) research on the effectiveness, opportunities and limitations in the provision of psychological counseling services through telemedicine [Francis, Boyd,

Aisbett, Newnham, Newnham, 2006; Orłowski, 2016; Parr, Philo, 2003];

4) the formation of telemedicine services within the framework of school psychological counseling [Lindsey, Kalafat, 1998].

We used methods of generalizing the results of previous studies in the field of using telemedicine tools for psychological counseling of various groups of the population: veterans in the United States, rural schoolchildren in Australia, patients of depression clinics, post-traumatic syndrome and panic attacks in the EU countries. We have also summarized the theoretical provisions of the implementation of telemedicine.

Telemedicine in the field of psychological counseling

The tools of psychological counseling through telemedicine generally include those technologies that are implemented through Internet technologies and allow for feedback between the patient and the psychologist in real time. In particular, consulting can be carried out through direct communication using webcams, as well as through online chats, e-mail, various messengers.

The introduction of telemedicine technologies into the practice of psychological counseling, especially those based on Internet technologies using webcams, is the most controversial issue in science over the past 10 years. The most obvious differences of opinion are in terms of the effectiveness of the use of this institutional form. But, despite some inconsistency of positions, the problem of telemedicine in psychological counseling is widely covered in modern research, while a number of works have already proved its effectiveness based on the analysis of such feedback forms as structured interviews and completed online survey forms [Tate, Zabinski, 2004; White, Jones, McGarry, 2000].

Part of the research is devoted to the comparison of telemedicine tools with the effectiveness of face-to-face psychological counseling. At the same time, despite the "spread" of positions on this issue, telemedicine is a scientifically significant area of research on the features of psychological counseling and training. A number of studies based on empirical data indicate a significant number of advantages of telemedicine in psychological counseling. First, many researchers point out that this method of assistance significantly reduces the problem of the stigma of visiting appropriate clinics, providing services in dangerous or uncomfortable conditions, reduces the time of visiting a psychotherapist or psychologist, which has a positive effect on people suffering from depression [Gould, Munfakh, Lubell, Kleinman, Parker, 2002].

However, despite these advantages, the disadvantages of this method of organizing psychological counseling were also identified. First of all, the problem area is ensuring the patient's safety in the presence of suicidal tendencies, administration of the service provision process, licensing of activities [Hickie, Groom, 2002]. Also, a number of studies have shown that psychologists are often unprepared for effective work in the conditions of telemedicine, which raises the question of the need for their professional retraining or even separate licensing of this activity of specialists. However, despite these limitations, in general, studies based on the behavior of US veterans consulted for PTSD have shown their effectiveness and safety [Gros, Veronee, Strachan, Ruggiero, Acierno, 2011].

In international practice, there are also many cases when clinics refused to provide psychological counseling services through telemedicine tools. In the same cases, when this type of assistance was applied and the clients were satisfied with it, the variability of the level of psychological problems with which the client applied was taken into account. So, in the case of treating panic attacks, this method is more effective than in the treatment of depression and post-traumatic syndrome. In addition, the results obtained are more relevant to adult patients, although the effectiveness of these methods in the process of counseling children and adolescents is also noted in separate works [Pesamaa, Ebeling, Kuusimaki, Winblad, Isohanni, Moilanen, 2004].

Generalization of the results of the study of the practice of psychological counseling with the help of telemedicine

In international practice, it is considered a proven fact that for a teenager with psychological problems, the rural social environment is more aggressive than the urban one. The social structure of rural society is intolerant of the manifestation of psychological problems, including in adolescents. Any manifestations of emotional problems are defined by society as a manifestation of weakness, are the

cause of harassment by adults, meet fears and condemnation. However, the severity of psychological problems is often exaggerated by others and can cause the appearance of social stigma, as well as lead to the formation of a stable pattern of delinquent behavior of a teenager [Boyd, Aisbett, Francis, Kelly, Newnham, Newnham, 2006].

In fact, all studies indicate that the use of psychological assistance services by adolescents living in rural areas is limited due to the lack of anonymity of its provision. A small social group of a separate settlement has much less opportunity to remain anonymous when receiving psychological help, so the use of telemedicine tools allows us to solve this problem. Also, a significant limitation of receiving psychological assistance is the lack of information about the possibility of receiving such assistance.

Thus, adolescents living in rural areas are sometimes more in need of psychological assistance – counseling and rehabilitation, but it is less accessible to them. Therefore, the provision of psychological assistance with the help of telemedicine services is the most adequate way to receive it, despite all possible restrictions. In addition, rural adolescents often do not have access to modern means of communication, so the most acceptable form of institutional support is the provision of psychological assistance in a rural school, even in cases where the problems experienced by a teenager cannot be solved by a school psychologist as part of supportive therapy.

It should be noted that this approach can also be considered effective because teenagers often turn to help only if it is offered. Therefore, international experience has developed a practice when school psychologists recommend rural adolescents to seek help from a specialized service that provides, based on the results of psychological preliminary consultation with a school psychologist, assistance through telemedicine services. In addition, based on the generalization of experience, it was shown that the most effective means of telemedicine is to offer standardized programs of psychological assistance [Arthur, 2005], as well as to increase the security of personal information by attracting specialists from regional centers.

Conclusion

The use of telemedicine tools is a unique tool for supporting adolescents with psychological problems and mental disorders in rural areas. At the same time, psychological counseling with the help of telemedicine tools at school is an effective means of accessibility of adolescents in rural areas to qualified assistance. The model of providing psychological assistance to adolescents through telemedicine, which has been tested in international practice, as part of the process of upbringing, education and socialization carried out by rural schools, can be used in Russia in the formation of institutional forms of psychological support for Russian schoolchildren.

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Международный опыт организации психологического консультирования подростков сельской местности

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Аннотация

Цель. Целью работы является обобщение международного опыта психологического консультирования с помощью инструментов телемедицины, выявление возможностей и ограничений использования этих инструментов на практике, доступности психологической помощи подростов, проживающих в сельской местности. **Методология.** В работе применяются методы обобщения и систематизации существующих исследований (международного опыта) в области применения инструментов телемедицины. **Результаты.** В результате исследования показано, что на подростков, имеющих психологические проблемы, сельская среда, как правило, влияет негативно, при этом именно для данной социальной группы психологическая помощь доступна в меньшей степени. Было выявлено, что к ограничениям в оказании такой помощи относится прежде всего отсутствие анонимности, развитой культуры психологической самопомощи, усиление социальной стигмы психических заболеваний в сельском социуме по сравнению с городскими территориями. Также в результате исследования показано, что наиболее приемлемой институциональной формой психологического консультирования является доступ к таким услугам посредством специализированной службы психологического консультирования, организованной в рамках воспитательного и образовательного пространства сельской школы. Кроме того, на основе обобщения опыта было показано, что наиболее эффективными средствами телемедицины является предложения стандартизированных программ психологической помощи, а также повышение защищенности личной информации за счет привлечения специалистов областных центров. **Заключение.** Применение инструментов телемедицины является уникальным инструментом поддержки подростков с психологическими проблемами и психическими расстройствами в условиях сельской местности. Психологическое консультирование с помощью инструментов телемедицины в школе является эффективным средством доступности подростков в сельской местности к квалифицированной помощи.

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Ключевые слова

Психологическое консультирование, подростки, сельская местность, международный опыт.

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