

Single session intervention: an example of clinical research in practice

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Presented at the 8th Annual THEMHS Conference, Hobart, 7-9 September 1999

Single session consultations seem to be an efficient and effective way of providing therapeutic interventions at a time of increasing demands for services and shrinking resources. Though 'one-off' consultations have a long clinical history, specific interest in their use was sparked by Talmon's (1990) observation that 78% of his clients who had had only one consultation had experienced improvement in their presenting problems. Several Australian studies have supported Talmon's advocacy of this approach (Boyhan, 1996; Hampson, O'Hanlon, Pentony and Cramby, 1994; Price, 1994) but have significant methodological flaws. The present study used a pre-post methodology to assess the effectiveness of single session interventions and explored whether family dynamics impacted on changes in the presenting problem and in level of coping. The results indicated significant changes in both. Family pride or morale was identified as a major factor in positive response to the interventions. The implications for the use of single sessions and for further clinically based research are discussed.