

Asselt, A. D. van, Dirksen, C. D., Arntz, A., Giesen-Bloo, J. H., van Dyck, R., Spinhoven, P., van Tilburg, W., Kremers, I.P., Nadort, M. & Severens, J.L. (2008). Outpatient psychotherapy for borderline personality disorder: cost-effectiveness of schema-focused therapy v. transference-focused psychotherapy. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 192, 450-457.

Background. Schema-focused therapy (SFT) and transference-focused psychotherapy (TFP) for borderline personality disorder were recently compared in a randomised multicentre trial.

Aims. To assess the societal cost-effectiveness of SFT v. TFP in treating borderline personality disorder.

Method. Costs were assessed by interview. Health-related quality of life was measured using EQ-5D. Outcomes were costs per recovered patient (recovery assessed with the Borderline Personality Disorder Severity Index) and costs per quality-adjusted life-year (QALY).

Results. Mean 4-year bootstrapped costs were €37 826 for SFT and €46 795 for TFP (95% uncertainty interval for difference –21 775 to 3546); QALYs were 2.15 for SFT and 2.27 for TFP (95% UI –0.51 to 0.28). The percentages of patients who recovered were 52% and 29% respectively. The SFT intervention was less costly and more effective than TFP (dominant), for recovery; it saved €90 457 for one QALY loss.

Conclusions. Despite the initial slight disadvantage in QALYs, there is a high probability that compared with TFP, SFT is a cost-effective treatment for borderline personality disorder.