

# Best Evidence Summaries of Topics in Mental Healthcare

**BEST in MH** *clinical question-answering service*

## Question

In adults with bipolar disorder, how effective are group therapies and interventions, compared to individual therapies and interventions, in improving patient outcomes?

## Clarification of question using *PICO* structure

*Patients:* Adults with bipolar disorder

*Intervention:* Group therapies and interventions

*Comparator:* Individual therapies and interventions

*Outcome:* Improving patient outcomes

## Plain language summary

Two systematic reviews and one randomised controlled trial were included in this summary, which demonstrated that more well-conducted trials are required to know the efficacy of group interventions, compared to individual interventions, for adults with bipolar disorder.

### **Clinical and research implications**

No definite clinical implications may be made based on the evidence included in this BEST summary. It appears that very few studies have directly compared individual versus group therapies in adults with bipolar disorder. A number of studies reported in two systematic reviews did compare either individual or group therapies with treatment as usual (TAU) as the comparator, but it was not clearly reported what TAU was. It is possible that some of these studies could be relevant to this BEST summary if TAU involved either group or individual therapy. Study authors consistently reported that well-conducted trials of psychosocial interventions as adjuncts to pharmacological maintenance treatments are required.

### **What does the evidence say?**

#### ***Number of included studies/reviews (number of participants)***

Two systematic reviews (SRs) (Beynon et al. 2008; Miklowitz 2008) and one randomised controlled trial (RCT) (Parikh et al. 2012) met the inclusion criteria for this BEST summary.

#### ***Main findings***

The SR by Beynon et al. (2008) evaluated psychosocial interventions for the prevention of relapse in bipolar disorder. This review included 12 studies, but only one study clearly compared group therapy with individual therapy (Rea et al. 2003). This small study (n=53) found that at 12 months' follow-up, there was no statistically significant difference between family therapy and individual psychosocial therapy for relapse in bipolar I patients hospitalised for manic episode.

The SR by Miklowitz (2008) aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of psychosocial interventions in addition to pharmacological treatment for bipolar disorder. The only study included in this review that is relevant to this BEST summary was the same as presented in Beynon et al (2008), as above.

Parikh et al. (2012) compared 6 sessions of group psychoeducation added on to naturalistic medication vs. 20 sessions on individual cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) added on to naturalistic medication in 204 people with bipolar disorder. There were no significant differences between the groups for mood burden, or for depression or mania. Over the 18-month study period, both groups demonstrated a significant decline in LIFE scores (mood burden) over time ( $p < 0.01$  for both groups).

#### ***Authors conclusions***

Beynon et al. (2008) stated that "overall, our review found no evidence from which to draw conclusions regarding the relative efficacy of the different psychosocial interventions."

Miklowitz (2008) did not make specific conclusion regarding individual versus group therapies, but stated that "adjunctive psychotherapy enhances the symptomatic and functional outcomes of bipolar disorder 2-year periods."

Parikh et al. (2012) concluded that "despite longer treatment duration and individualised treatment, CBT did not show a significantly greater clinical benefit compared to group psychoeducation."

**Reliability of conclusions/Strength of evidence**

The SR by Beynon et al. (2008) had a low risk of bias, although the one relevant study included in this review (to this BEST summary) was small and of had ‘some limitations in quality.’ The SR by Miklowitz (2008) had an unclear risk of bias, and the RCT by Parikh et al. (2012) had a high risk of bias, so the reliability of the study results are uncertain.

**What do guidelines say?**

NICE guidelines for bipolar disorder (CG185, 2014) make the following recommendations regarding structure of psychological interventions in longer term, secondary care;

“Offer a structured psychological intervention (individual, group or family), which has been designed for bipolar disorder and has a published evidence-based manual describing how it should be delivered, to prevent relapse or for people who have some persisting symptoms between episodes of mania or bipolar depression.” (pp.9)

**Date question received:** 08/02/2016

**Date searches conducted:** 16/02/2016

**Date answer completed:** 18/02/2016

**References****Systematic reviews**

Beynon, S., Soares-Weiser, K., Woolacott, N., Duffy, S., & Geddes, J. R. (2008). Psychosocial interventions for the prevention of relapse in bipolar disorder: systematic review of controlled trials. *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, 192(1), 5-11.

Miklowitz, D. J. (2008). Adjunctive psychotherapy for bipolar disorder: state of the evidence. *American Journal of Psychiatry*.

**Randomised controlled trials**

Parikh, S. V., Zaretsky, A., Beaulieu, S., Yatham, L. N., Young, L. T., Patelis-Siotis, I., & Cervantes, P. (2012). A randomized controlled trial of psychoeducation or cognitive-behavioral therapy in bipolar disorder: a Canadian Network for Mood and Anxiety treatments (CANMAT) study [CME]. *The Journal of clinical psychiatry*, 73(6), 1-478.

**Guidelines**

National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (2014) Bipolar Disorder: assessment and management CG185. London: NICE.

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg185/resources/bipolar-disorder-assessment-and-management-35109814379461>

## Results

### *Systematic reviews*











Author (year)	Search date	Inclusion criteria	Number of included studies	Summary of results	Risk of bias
Beynon et al. (2008)	2005	<p><b>Participants:</b> Adults with bipolar disorder (type I or type II)</p> <p><b>Intervention:</b> Psychosocial interventions</p> <p><b>Comparator:</b> Any other intervention</p> <p><b>Outcome:</b> Relapse prevention</p> <p><b>Study designs:</b> Randomised or quasi-randomised controlled trials with a follow-up of at least 3 months' duration</p>	12	Of the 12 studies included in this review, only one was relevant to this BEST summary. This small study (n=53) found no statistically significant difference between family therapy and individual psychosocial therapy for relapse (defined as admission to hospital: OR = 0.6 [95% CI 0.19 to 1.89]; or as stated by the authors: OR = 0.80 6 [95% CI 0.27 to 2.36] (Rea et al. 2003).	Low
Miklowitz (2008)	2008	<p><b>Participants:</b> Adults with bipolar disorder</p> <p><b>Intervention:</b> Psychotherapy adjunctive to pharmacotherapy</p> <p><b>Comparator:</b> Any other intervention</p> <p><b>Outcome:</b> Time to recovery, recurrence, duration of episodes, symptom severity and psychosocial functioning</p> <p><b>Study design:</b> Randomised controlled trials</p>	18	As above, only one study included in this review by Miklowitz was relevant to this BEST summary (Rea et al. 2003).	Unclear

*Randomised controlled trials*







Author (year)	Inclusion criteria	Number of participants	Summary of results	Risk of bias
Parikh et al. (2012)	<p><b>Participants:</b> Adults (aged 18-64 years) with bipolar disorder type I or II according to DSM-IV. At least 2 episodes of significant symptoms or full episodes in the month randomization.</p> <p><b>Intervention:</b> Cognitive behavioural therapy, 20 individual sessions of 50 minutes.</p> <p><b>Comparator:</b> Group psychoeducation, 6 sessions of 90 minutes from The Life Goals manual.</p> <p><b>Outcome:</b> Mood burden (LIFE), mania (Clinician-Administered Rating Scale for Mania), depression (HDRS).</p>	N=204	There were no significant differences between the groups for mood burden, or for depression (p=0.89) or mania (p=0.96). Over the 18-month study period, both groups demonstrated a decline in LIFE scores (mood burden) over time (p<0.01 for both groups).	High

## Risk of bias


### Systematic reviews

Author (year)	RISK OF BIAS				
	Inclusion criteria	Searches	Review process	Quality assessment	Synthesis
Beynon et al. (2008)					
Miklowitz (2008)					

### Randomised controlled trials

Study	RISK OF BIAS					
	Random allocation	Allocation concealment	Blinding of participants and personnel	Blinding of outcome assessment	Incomplete outcome data	Selective Reporting
Parikh et al. (2012)						

 Low risk

 High risk

 Unclear risk

### Search details

Source	Search Strategy	Number of hits	Relevant evidence identified
<i>Guidelines</i>			
NICE	Bipolar disorder	21	
<i>Systematic Reviews</i>			
MEDLINE	1 Psychotherapy, Group/ (12565) 2 (group adj2 therap\$).ab,ti. (15803) 3 (group adj2 intervention\$).ab,ti. (22031) 4 1 or 2 or 3 (46175) 5 Mood Disorders/ or Bipolar Disorder/ (44191) 6 (biploar\$ or bi-polar\$ or manic\$ or mania\$).ab,ti. (15954) 7 hypomani\$.ab,ti. (2293) 8 5 or 6 or 7 (49743) 9 4 and 8 (317) 10 (systematic\$ review\$ or meta-analytic\$ or metanalysis or metaanalysis or meta analysis or meta?synthesis or meta synthesis or meta?regression or meta regression).ab,ti. (129321) 11 ((synthes\$ adj3 (literature or evidence)) or integrative review or data synthesis or research synthesis or narrative synthesis or systematic study or systematic studies or systematic comparison\$ or systematic overview\$ or evidence based review or comprehensive review or critical review or quantitative review or	35	

	<p>structured review or realist review or realist synthesis).ab,ti. (49788)</p> <p>12 exp Meta-Analysis/ (61543)</p> <p>13 meta-analysis.ab,ti,pt. (91081)</p> <p>14 10 or 11 or 12 or 13 (184045)</p> <p>15 (medline or pubmed or Cochrane or embase or cinahl or psyc?lit or psyc?info).ab. (113345)</p> <p>16 ((literature adj3 search\$) or (database\$ adj3 search\$) or (bibliographic adj3 search\$) or (electronic adj3 search\$) or (electronic adj3 database\$) or (computeri?ed adj3 search\$) or (internet adj3 search\$) or included studies or (inclusion adj3 studies) or inclusion criteria or selection criteria or predefined criteria or predetermined criteria).ab. (133783)</p> <p>17 ((assess\$ adj3 (quality or validity)) or (select\$ adj3 (study or studies)) or (data adj3 extract\$) or extracted data or (data adj2 abstracted) or (data adj3 abstraction) or published intervention\$ or ((study or studies) adj2 evaluat\$) or (intervention\$ adj2 evaluat\$) or confidence interval\$ or heterogeneity or pooled or pooling or odds ratio\$ or Jadad or coding).ab. (814362)</p> <p>18 15 or 16 or 17 (936414)</p> <p>19 review.pt. (2064794)</p> <p>20 18 and 19 (144577)</p> <p>21 18 and 19 (144577)</p> <p>22 (review\$ adj4 (papers or trials or studies or evidence or intervention\$ or evaluation\$)).ab,ti. (120826)</p> <p>23 14 or 18 or 20 or 21 (1014826)</p> <p>24 (letter or editorial or comment).pt. (1455023)</p> <p>25 23 not 24 (1007020)</p>		
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	<p>26 Animals/ (5766662)</p> <p>27 Humans/ (15660680)</p> <p>28 26 not 27 (4154861)</p> <p>29 25 not 28 (917746)</p> <p>30 9 and 29 (35)</p>		
EMBASE	<p>1 (group adj2 therap\$.ti,ab. (23553)</p> <p>2 (group adj2 intervention\$.ti,ab. (30729)</p> <p>3 group therapy/ (19004)</p> <p>4 1 or 2 or 3 (66654)</p> <p>5 *bipolar disorder/th [Therapy] (1707)</p> <p>6 *mood disorder/th [Therapy] (736)</p> <p>7 (bipolar\$ or bi-polar\$ or manic\$ or mania\$ or hypomani\$).ti,ab. (80856)</p> <p>8 5 or 6 or 7 (81755)</p> <p>9 4 and 8 (482)</p> <p>10 (systematic\$ review\$ or systematic\$ literature review\$ or meta-analytic\$ or meta?analysis or metanalysis or meta analysis or meta?synthesis or meta synthesis or meta?regression or meta regression).ab,ti. (169674)</p> <p>11 ((synthes\$ adj3 literature) or (synthes\$ adj3 evidence) or (synthes\$ adj2 qualitative) or integrative review or data synthesis or research synthesis or narrative synthesis or systematic study or systematic studies or systematic comparison\$ or systematic overview\$).ab,ti. (32037)</p> <p>12 ((systematic adj2 search\$) or systematic\$ literature research\$ or (review adj3 scientific literature) or (literature review adj2 side effect\$) or (literature review adj2 adverse effect\$) or (literature review adj2 adverse</p>	60	

	<p>event\$) or (evidence-based adj2 review) or (evidence-based adj2 review)).ab.ti. (19053)</p> <p>13 (comprehensive review or critical review or critical analysis or quantitative review or structured review or realist review or realist synthesis or (pooled adj2 analysis) or (pooled data adj6 (studies or trials)) or (medline and (inclusion adj3 criteria)) or (search adj (strateg\$ or term\$))).ab.ti. (77271)</p> <p>14 exp "systematic review"/ (101545)</p> <p>15 meta analysis/ (104164)</p> <p>16 (Medline or pubmed or Cochrane or embase or cinahl or psyc?lit or psyc?info or lilacs or (literature adj3 search\$) or (database\$ adj3 search\$) or (bibliographic adj3 search\$) or (electronic adj3 search\$) or (electronic adj3 database\$) or (computeri?ed adj3 search\$) or (internet adj3 search\$)).ab. (193458)</p> <p>17 ((inclusion adj3 studies) or inclusion criteria or selection criteria or predefined criteria or predetermined criteria or (assess\$ adj3 (quality or validity)) or (select\$ adj3 (study or studies)) or (data adj3 extract\$) or extracted data or (data adj2 abstracted)).ab. (234850)</p> <p>18 ((data adj3 abstraction) or published intervention\$ or ((study or studies) adj2 evaluat\$) or (intervention\$ adj2 evaluat\$) or confidence interval\$ or heterogeneity or pooled or pooling or odds ratio\$ or (Jadad or coding) or evidence-based).ab. (968943)</p> <p>19 10 or 11 or 12 or 13 or 14 or 15 (300086)</p> <p>20 16 or 17 or 18 (1254289)</p> <p>21 review.pt. (2128381)</p> <p>22 20 and 21 (152661)</p> <p>23 review.ti. (359123)</p> <p>24 20 and 23 (79964)</p>		
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	<p>25 (review\$ adj10 (papers or trials or trial data or studies or evidence or intervention\$ or evaluation\$ or outcome\$ or findings)).ab,ti. (353753)</p> <p>26 (retriev\$ adj10 (papers or trials or studies or evidence or intervention\$ or evaluation\$ or outcome\$ or findings)).ab,ti. (17614)</p> <p>27 19 or 22 or 24 or 25 or 26 (638800)</p> <p>28 (letter or editorial).pt. (1423975)</p> <p>29 27 not 28 (630531)</p> <p>30 exp animal/ (21123553)</p> <p>31 nonhuman/ (4685261)</p> <p>32 30 or 31 (22463965)</p> <p>33 human/ (16585198)</p> <p>34 32 not 33 (5878767)</p> <p>35 29 not 34 (602835)</p> <p>36 ("cochrane database of systematic reviews\$" or "the cochrane database of systematic reviews").jn. (12505)</p> <p>37 35 not 36 (591452)</p> <p>38 conference abstract.pt. (2145768)</p> <p>39 37 not 38 (515155)</p> <p>40 9 and 39 (60)</p>		
PsycINFO/CINAHL	<p>1 exp Group Psychotherapy/ (20705)</p> <p>2 exp Group Intervention/ (1396)</p>	19	

	<p>3 (group adj2 therap\$).ab,ti. (14485)</p> <p>4 (group adj2 intervention\$).ab,ti. (11227)</p> <p>5 1 or 2 or 3 or 4 (36972)</p> <p>6 *Bipolar Disorder/ (19345)</p> <p>7 (bipolar\$ or bi-polar\$ or manic\$ or mania\$ or hypomanic).ab,ti. (41718)</p> <p>8 (bipolar\$ or bi-polar\$ or manic\$ or mania\$ or hypomani\$).ab,ti. (42211)</p> <p>9 6 or 7 or 8 (42583)</p> <p>10 5 and 9 (310)</p> <p>11 (Cochrane\$ or review or overview or (review adj2 literature) or (synthes\$ adj3 (literature\$ or research or studies or data))).ti. (134815)</p> <p>12 (meta analysis or literature review or systematic review).md. (128660)</p> <p>13 (pooled analys\$ or ((data adj2 pool\$) and studies) or ((hand or manual\$ or database\$ or computer\$ or electronic\$) adj2 search\$) or ((electronic\$ or bibliographic\$) adj2 (database\$ or data base\$))).ab,ti. (9552)</p> <p>14 exp Meta Analysis/ (3781)</p> <p>15 11 or 12 or 13 or 14 (233322)</p> <p>16 (comment reply or editorial or letter or review book or review media).dt. (279749)</p> <p>17 (electronic collection or dissertation abstract or encyclopedia).pt. (450395)</p> <p>18 (rat or rats or mouse or mice or hamster or hamsters or animal or animals or dog or dogs or cat or cats or bovine or sheep).ab,sh,ti. (284297)</p> <p>19 16 or 17 or 18 (949015)</p> <p>20 15 not 19 (140797)</p>		
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	21 10 and 20 (19)		
<i>Primary Studies</i>			
MEDLINE	<p>1 Psychotherapy, Group/ (12565)</p> <p>2 (group adj2 therap\$.ab,ti. (15803)</p> <p>3 (group adj2 intervention\$.ab,ti. (22031)</p> <p>4 1 or 2 or 3 (46175)</p> <p>5 Mood Disorders/ or Bipolar Disorder/ (44191)</p> <p>6 (biploar\$ or bi-polar\$ or manic\$ or mania\$.ab,ti. (15954)</p> <p>7 hypomani\$.ab,ti. (2293)</p> <p>8 5 or 6 or 7 (49743)</p> <p>9 4 and 8 (317)</p> <p>10 "randomized controlled trial".pt. (406964)</p> <p>11 (random\$ or placebo\$ or single blind\$ or double blind\$ or triple blind\$.ti,ab. (889522)</p> <p>12 (retraction of publication or retracted publication).pt. (8520)</p> <p>13 10 or 11 or 12 (983010)</p> <p>14 (animals not humans).sh. (4154861)</p> <p>15 ((comment or editorial or meta-analysis or practice-guideline or review or letter or journal correspondence) not "randomized controlled trial").pt. (3531362)</p> <p>16 (random sampl\$ or random digit\$ or random effect\$ or random survey or random regression).ti,ab. not "randomized controlled trial".pt. (56432)</p> <p>17 13 not (14 or 15 or 16) (729430)</p>	107	

	18 9 and 17 (107)		
EMBASE	<p>1 (group adj2 therap\$.ti,ab. (23553)</p> <p>2 (group adj2 intervention\$.ti,ab. (30729)</p> <p>3 group therapy/ (19004)</p> <p>4 1 or 2 or 3 (66654)</p> <p>5 *bipolar disorder/th [Therapy] (1707)</p> <p>6 *mood disorder/th [Therapy] (736)</p> <p>7 (bipolar\$ or bi-polar\$ or manic\$ or mania\$ or hypomani\$.ti,ab. (80856)</p> <p>8 5 or 6 or 7 (81755)</p> <p>9 4 and 8 (482)</p> <p>10 (random\$ or placebo\$ or single blind\$ or double blind\$ or triple blind\$.ti,ab. (1166780)</p> <p>11 RETRACTED ARTICLE/ (7912)</p> <p>12 10 or 11 (1174495)</p> <p>13 (animal\$ not human\$.sh,hw. (3981623)</p> <p>14 (book or conference paper or editorial or letter or review).pt. not exp randomized controlled trial/ (4308067)</p> <p>15 (random sampl\$ or random digit\$ or random effect\$ or random survey or random regression).ti,ab. not exp randomized controlled trial/ (69329)</p> <p>16 12 not (13 or 14 or 15) (905365)</p> <p>17 9 and 16 (175)</p>	175	

PsycINFO/CINAHL	<p>1 exp Group Psychotherapy/ (20705)</p> <p>2 exp Group Intervention/ (1396)</p> <p>3 (group adj2 therap\$).ab,ti. (14485)</p> <p>4 (group adj2 intervention\$).ab,ti. (11227)</p> <p>5 1 or 2 or 3 or 4 (36972)</p> <p>6 *Bipolar Disorder/ (19345)</p> <p>7 (bipolar\$ or bi-polar\$ or manic\$ or mania\$ or hypomanic).ab,ti. (41718)</p> <p>8 (bipolar\$ or bi-polar\$ or manic\$ or mania\$ or hypomani\$).ab,ti. (42211)</p> <p>9 6 or 7 or 8 (42583)</p> <p>10 5 and 9 (310)</p> <p>11 (random\$ or placebo\$ or single blind\$ or double blind\$ or triple blind\$).ti,ab. (173018)</p> <p>12 (animals not humans).sh. (6268)</p> <p>13 exp Clinical Trials/ (9354)</p> <p>14 random*.mp. (151622)</p> <p>15 13 not 14 (4019)</p> <p>16 11 not (12 or 15) (172407)</p> <p>17 10 and 16 (80)</p>	80	
CENTRAL			

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