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“Schizophrenia” does not exist

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Disease classifications should drop this unhelpful description of symptoms

In March 2015 a group of academics, patients, and relatives published an opinion piece in a national newspaper in the Netherlands, proposing that we drop the “essentially contested”¹ term “schizophrenia,” with its connotation of hopeless chronic brain disease, and replace it with something like “psychosis spectrum syndrome.”²

We launched two websites (www.schizofreniebestaatniet.nl/english/ and www.psychosenet.nl) aimed at informing the public about the nature of psychotic illness and helping patients deal with pervasive, unscientifically pessimistic, organic views of their symptoms. The timing was no coincidence.

Several recent papers by different authors have called for modernised psychiatric nomenclature, particularly regarding the term “schizophrenia.”^{3 4 5 6} Japan and South Korea have already abandoned this term.

Current classifications

The classification of mental disorders, as laid down in ICD-10 (*International Classification of Diseases*, 10th revision) and DSM-5 (*Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* ...

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