



Do Patients' Idiographic Goals Have an Impact on Change in Eating Disorder Symptoms?

A Naturalistic Network Study in Norwegian Routine Clinical Care

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Introduction: Eating disorders (EDs) are complex psychiatric conditions with heterogeneous presentations, high comorbidity, and variable treatment outcomes. Network theory conceptualizes symptoms as dynamically interacting processes and offers a framework for personalized treatment. Ecological Momentary Assessment (EMA) allows real-time measurement of psychological processes in naturalistic settings and may help identify mechanisms of symptom change during treatment.

Aims: To examine whether patients' own treatment goals are associated with ED symptom change, identify psychological processes central to symptom reduction, and evaluate the feasibility of EMA in inpatient and day-treatment settings.

Method: Approximately 30 patients aged 18–45 receiving ED treatment through either a five-day inpatient unit or a meal support day program at Lovisenberg Diaconal Hospital will be recruited. Diagnoses include anorexia, bulimia, binge eating disorder, and atypical variants. Participants complete baseline and post-treatment measures (EDE-Q, CIA, CORE-OM) and report idiographic goals using Goal Based Outcome (GBO). During 10 days, EMA surveys are completed four times daily following meals via a smartphone platform. Temporal network analyses will examine associations between symptoms and psychological processes.

Results: Although data collection is still in its infancy, we anticipate identifying individual symptom dynamics and central psychological processes linked to ED symptom change. Preliminary data may reveal patterns in how idiographic goals influence symptom trajectories in both inpatient and day-treatment settings.

Discussion: Findings may provide insight into within-person symptom dynamics, inform personalized treatment strategies, and evaluate the feasibility of integrating EMA into routine specialist care for EDs. EMA compliance and acceptability will be discussed further.