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Competencies of professionals in multidisciplinary teams in mental health centres in the Czech Republic

Monika Dudová

Charles University, Czech Republic

Statement of problem: Since 2013 there has been an ongoing transformation of psychiatric care in the Czech Republic. Psychiatry care should stand on 4 pillars: psychiatry hospitals, where the number of beds is being reduced, psychiatry departments in general hospitals, outpatient departments and new low-threshold pillar – Mental Health Care Centres (MHC). The core of MHC is a multidisciplinary team consisted of psychiatrist, psychologists, peer worker(s), psychiatric nurses and social workers.

Findings: The research was taking place during the launching of the pilot MHC projects. The multidisciplinary brings new views on providing care to people with SMI. The results showed that the overlapping of competencies in MHC is not an issue. However sharing, looking into the health or social databases, giving medication, insufficient salaries for professionals or nonexisting network of the other community mental health services were marked as the problematic areas. The obstacles, risky for the optimal function of the team, are caused by the legislative definition of psychiatric nurses' and social workers' competencies.

Conclusion & Significance: The existing definition of competencies of professionals, mainly psychiatric nurses and social workers, is not corresponding with the needs of community oriented mental health services in MHC. The transition from institutionalized care to a community environment needs different education of psychiatric nurses, who should learn the methods of the social work, community work or case management. Social workers should be educated in areas of psychopathology, psychopharmacology or crisis intervention. The new form of care of SMI in community conditions brings a new form of cooperation between the professionals, contributes to the destigmatization of the people with mental disorders and psychiatry in general. The deinstitutionalization and transformation of psychiatric care is aimed at improving quality of psychiatry services and increasing the full-fledged inclusion of people with mental disorders into society.

Biography

Monika Dudová is a PhD. student at Charles University in Prague, the Czech Republic. In her postgraduate study she is focused on mental health and work with people with mental disorders, and in her dissertation she examines the evaluation of the psychiatric reform from the view of the community services users. Moreover she is a systematic psychotherapist and in her own praxis she focuses on adult population, mainly adults with experiences with anxiety disorder and other psychiatric difficulties. Currently, she works as a researcher in a project called KREAS – A creativity and adaptability as a prerequisite for Europe's success in an interconnected world.

dudova.mon@gmail.com

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