

PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES OF MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL IN ALBANIA DURING THE PROCESS OF DECENTRALIZATION OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

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ABSTRACT

Mental health services in Albania are inserted into a large transformation process since 2002, after the signing of the Mental Health Project of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe. Human resource development is the important issues identified in the Policy (MOH, 2003). This article aims to describe the challenges encountered by the human resources that offer mental health care, identification of the main issues related to providing a inclusive and high quality care, as well as some recommendations for possible interventions in this sector. There are two methods used to achieve the goals of the study. First, secondary analysis of the data, which are retrieved from published data of the EHO, the MoH, legal framework on mental health in Albania, and regulatory documents consultation with range of electronic databases. Second, qualitative methods of data collection using semi-structured depth interview with four professional categories: psychiatrists, medical doctors working in psychiatric facilities without specialization in psychiatry, nurses and psychosocial care providers. Lack of human resources is evident in Albania. Increasing the number of professionals working in mental health services is a necessary condition to fulfil the population's needs for a specialized attention and a better distribution of these resources in response to the need of improving access to services mental health. The transition from traditional services with beds towards community services, as well as the involvement of new professions in multidisciplinary teams has brought a fundamental change in care models. Regarding to the education of mental health specialists, to enrich the undergraduate curriculum for doctors, nurses, and also other professionals, with mental health modules, with a particular focus on community mental health would help to improve the quality of mental health services. Respondents recommend strategies to compensate for shortages of specialist mental health professionals Such as: task-shifting, shared competencies, health between substitution Professions, and multiple tasks performed by a Particular category of providers.

Keyword: Mental health professionals, decentralization of mental health services, education, multidisciplinary teams, Albania, Psychiatrists, Social worker, Psychologists.