Child and adolescent psychiatry in Poland – to improve is to change

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Abstract

Introduction: Last decades were very significant for the recognition of the wide range of mental disorders in children and adolescents as well as the availability and quality of undertaken interventions. Serious attention is given to the development of appropriate human resources for mental health care. These changes affect the guidelines contained in the specialty training in child and adolescent psychiatry (CAP). Integration of biological, psychological and social approach determine the core of the training curriculum.

Objectives: The aim was to assess the quality of the child and adolescent mental health care in Poland with a particular reference to the specialty training curriculum in Poland.

Methods: The authors analysed the legislation regarding the mental health care in Poland as well as the training programme for CAP and compared it with CAP training programmes in other European countries.

Results: In Poland certain steps were taken to ensure the best use of the available knowledge and train an increased number of CAP specialists in past few years. These include facilitated availability of the specialization, amenities provided to the CAP trainees related to the salaries and changes in training program adjusting it to the current research trends and requirements in the world. A new approach was proposed according to the current trends in the community care with the extension of the internship in the day-care ward and in the community treatment team. Also a holistic approach to young patient resulted in prolonged internships in pediatric neurology and general pediatric wards. Emphasis has been laid on the stronger separation of child and adolescent psychiatry from adult psychiatry resulting in shortening the internships in psychiatric wards for adults.

Discussion: Despite all the measures applied to improve the situation of Polish Child and Adolescent Psychiatry we are still struggling a fail to provide easier and faster access to health services specially in the provinces and smaller towns. Poland is a country with an average scale of the prevalence of mental disorders comparing to both Europe and the whole world with a slight upward trend.

Conclusions: Changes for the better are still made, but we will have to wait a few more years for their rewarding effects. Further work on improving the access to mental health care and on refining the training in CAP in Poland is necessary. To improve is to change; to be perfect is to change often.*

*Winston Churchill

Supplementary material: Complete presentation available at http://ijcnmh.arc-publishing.org

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