

**IMPROVING QUALITY OF CARE IN
PSYCHIATRY: THE WPA POSITION
AND THE ITALIAN EXPERIENCE**

Mario Maj

The WPA supports the shift of psychiatric care from mental hospitals to community mental health services in order to improve patients' clinical outcomes, quality of life and satisfaction with services.

Deinstitutionalization is not an objective *per se*. It is a means to improve patients' clinical outcomes and quality of life.

Community care is not itself a treatment. It is a vehicle for delivery of treatments.

Community mental health care requires a continuing political commitment and adequate investments.

**Investments should be made before, not after,
the deinstitutionalization process begins.**

A long-term monitoring of the process of the implementation of community mental health care is essential.

**The quality of care delivered in the community
has to be evaluated constantly.**

**Families of patients with severe mental illness
should be adequately supported.**

Physical health of people with severe mental illness living in the community should be protected and promoted.

Community mental health services are expected to deal with the whole range of mental disorders existing in their catchment area, not only with psychotic disorders.

Empathy and enthusiasm are important, but mental disorders are not treated by empathy and enthusiasm.

Continuity of care and monitoring of drop-outs are essential.

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