Mental health, human rights and standards of care:
Assessment of the quality of institutional care for adults with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities in the WHO European Region

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WHO European Mental Health Action Plan 2013-2020

Overarching aims

• Improve the mental well-being of the population and reduce the burden of mental disorders, with a special focus on vulnerable groups, exposure to determinants and risk behaviours.

• Respect the rights of people with mental health problems and offer equitable opportunities to attain the highest quality of life, addressing stigma and discrimination.

• Establish accessible, safe and effective services that meet people’s mental, physical and social needs and the expectations of people with mental health problems and their families.
WHO’s health policy framework
Health 2020

**Strategic objectives**

- Improve health for all and reducing health inequalities
- Improving leadership and participatory governance for health

**Priority areas**

- Invest in health through a life-course approach
- Tackle major disease burdens, including NCDs
- Strengthen people-centred health systems
- Create supportive environments and resilient communities
Mental health, human rights and standards of care
Assessment of the quality of institutional care for adults with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities in the WHO European Region

New report reveals need for more humane, personalized approach in European Region’s long-term institutions for adults with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities
05-06-2016
WHO Europe has released a new report entitled “Mental health, human rights and standards of care”. It assesses the quality of institutional care for adults with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities in the WHO European Region.

Policy dialogue on implementing 2030 Agenda held during Regional Director’s visit to Romania
05-06-2016
New report reveals need for more humane, personalized approach in European Region’s long-term institutions for adults with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities
05-06-2016
Protect our environment, protect our health: World Environment Day 2018
05-06-2018
Tobacco breaks hearts – choose health, not tobacco
30-05-2016
World No Tobacco Day 2015 winners: "tobacco-free" stories from the WHO European Region
26-05-2015
More news
**Challenges**

- Sub-standard **living conditions** and wide-spread incidents of **humiliation, neglect and abuse**
- Difficulties and obstacles in implementing national **deinstitutionalization strategies**
- **Poor collaboration** between the health and social care sectors
- **Lack of data** about long-term institutions for adults with mental disabilities

**WHO/Europe Responses**

- **Quality assessments** of a sample of institutions in participating countries
- **National reports** of findings from institutional assessments
- **Regional report** on institutions providing long-term care for adults with mental disabilities
- **Better data** about the number and characteristics of long-term institutions
Implementation

**Phase 1 (2016):** Region-wide survey on the number and characteristics of institutions providing long-term care for adults with mental disabilities.

**Phase 2 (2017):** 75 facilities across 24 Member States and Kosovo\(^1\) underwent the WHO QualityRights assessment.

**Next steps: Phase 3 (2018/19):** Implementation of quality standards based on national assessment reports and the UN CRPD.

\(^1\) In accordance with UN Security Council resolution 1244(1999)
Participants

Phase 1

Phase 2
## Phase 1: List of variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Data on institutions</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Ownership of institutions</td>
<td>• Number of institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Accountability of institutions</td>
<td>• Total number of residents in institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Responsibility for inspection</td>
<td>• Gender</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Independent complaint mechanisms</td>
<td>• Age groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Number of complaints</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Deinstitutionalization plan</td>
<td>• Diagnosis</td>
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<td>• Funding of deinstitutionalization</td>
<td>• Co-morbidities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Implementation of deinstitutionalization</td>
<td>• Staffing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Phase 1: Results
Ownership of facilities
Phase 1: Results
Accountability
Phase 1: Results

Age groups

(The frequency of age groups of service users, as reported by 13 countries)
Phase 1: Results
Length of stay
(The frequency of length of stay of service users, as reported by 10 countries)
Phase 2: WHO QualityRights assessment themes

1. Standard of living (Art. 28)
2. Physical and mental health (Art. 25)
3. Legal capacity and personal liberty (Art. 12 and 14)
4. Freedom from torture and abuse (Art. 15 and 16)
5. Independent living (Art. 19)
“The building is dilapidated; many windows are broken; floors are uneven and with holes; doors to toilets are not wide enough for wheelchair users.”

“In some cases, the medical files of residents have not been updated for years.”

“Lack of evidence of the informed part of consent.”

“The staff here have never heard of the CRPD.”

“This institution is the end station in the existing care pathway.”
The percentage of scoring opportunities for Standards

In total:

- Achieved in full: 686
- Achieved partially: 280
- Achievement initiated: 570
- Not initiated: 745
- Not Applicable: 2,450

Within each Theme:

- Standard of living
- Physical and mental health
- Legal capacity and personal liberty
- Freedom from torture and abuse
- Independent living
Theme 1: Standard of living

- Restrictions in communication and movement
- Unstimulating environment
- Dependence on charities
- Social isolation
Theme 2: Physical and mental health

- Insufficient staffing
- Absence of recovery-oriented approach
- Discrimination by other health services
Theme 3: Legal capacity and personal liberty

- Availability vs. needs
- A big grey zone around free and informed consent
- Deprivation of legal capacity
- Absence of supported decision making
Theme 4: Freedom from torture and abuse

- Unfamiliarity with the CRPD [CAT]
- Unfamiliarity with alternatives to seclusion and restraint
- Dubious implementation of appeal/complaint procedures
Theme 5: Independent living

- No infrastructure for alternative or supported housing
- Complete exclusion from education and employment market
“Bathing and toilet facilities are adequate, modern and adapted to service users’ needs. Privacy is guaranteed.”

“Individual recovery plans are used and reviewed regularly with the service users.”

“Contact details of legal representatives are posted in all areas of the institution.”

“Staff are trained in alternative interventions to deal with crises. They claim that, in most cases, a conversation alone helps to calm a person down.”

“Investments for providing housing and employment for more residents in the community are planned.”
QualityRights Assessments

E-Training

Capacity building:

WHO QualityRights capacity building tools

6 core mental health and human rights modules

3 specialised modules:

- Realising supported decision making and advance planning
- Promoting recovery in mental health and related services
- Implementing strategies to end the use of seclusion and restraints and other coercive practices

Guidance on improving and transforming services

Quality improvement work in facilities

PHASE 2

PHASE 3
QualityRights guidance tools

Tools for advocacy and civil society

- Setting up and operating a civil society organization
- Conducting advocacy campaigns to integrate human rights in mental health

Guidance and peer support

- Providing individualised peer support within services and the community
- Setting up and running peer support groups
From quality assessment to quality improvement (Phase 3)