

Employment and recovery of people with severe mental disorders. A view from Andalusia

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Recovery and people with severe mental disorders (1)

□ Increasing relevance in the field of care of people with this kind of problems in relationship with

- Community Mental Health and Psychosocial rehabilitation
- User's organisations
- Public initiatives in many countries and regions

□ One word, different meanings:

- Ordinary sense: to recover previous level of functioning ("cure")
- In the field of Severe Mental Disorders: redefined as clinical and functional remission
- In a more wide sense: to recover or to achieve a pleasant and meaningful life, even with some levels of symptoms and disability

Recovery and people with severe mental disorders (1)

□ Two alternative or complementary “models”:

✓ A “professional” view

- recovery *from* the illness
- recovery as an *outcome*

- based on clinical and epidemiological evidence
- related with the professional interventions
 - Pharmacology
 - Psychosocial rehabilitation

✓ A “user’s” view

- recovery *in* the illness
- recovery as a *process*

- based on first persons accounts and qualitative studies
- related with some professional interventions but also on self-help, informal care, personnel efforts and “positive health” (resilience, hope, self determination, etc.)

People with severe mental disorders:

- Group of people with severe mental disorders defined by:
 - **Diagnosis: Schizophrenia, Affective Psychoses, Personality disorders**
 - **Prolonged evolution**
 - **And disability**

Community Mental Health :

- Evolution of the social constructs of severe mental disorders
 - **"madness" / "illness" / "citizenship"**
 - **Citizens who have multiple difficulties in exercising their rights because of:**
 - **Illness**
 - **Disability**
 - **Social Barriers (Stigma and discrimination)**
- New organisation of care
 - **Service Networks**
 - **Multiple administrative sectors (Health, Social Services, Education, Employment, Justice System...)**
 - **Aiming for rehabilitation and recovery**
 - **Inclusion and participation of service users, their families and the civil society**

Two perspectives on the employment of people with severe mental disorders

❑ Prolonging mental health care

- Rehabilitation → Vocational rehabilitation → Employment
- Considering the effect on the person
 - not consistent evidence on clinical aspects
 - autonomy, social functioning, quality of life, self-esteem

❑ A general employment policy applied for a specific part of the population

- Group of people who have a low rate of employment and specific difficulties
- Work as a basis for social inclusion and citizenship

Integrating the Perspectives : Paradigm of the Community mental health

- Citizens who have difficulties in exercising their rights
- The aims on "recovery" and "personal autonomy"
- Employment as the base of social inclusion
- Intervention and services networks
- Active, individual and collective role of affected people

Base of the employment programmes for people with severe mental disorders:

- ❑ The multiple roles of employment (activity, income, social value)
 - rehabilitation
 - Social inclusion and citizenship

- ❑ Specific difficulties of the group (rate of unemployment above 80%)
 - Diversity of aspects affected by mental illness and disability
 - Evolution is variable
 - Effects of the illness on the “preconditions of employment”
 - Interferences of care
 - Stigmatisation and discrimination

- ❑ Feedback on the strategies and programmes used

Evolution of the Programs for the Employment of people with Severe Mental Disorders

Institutional Ergo therapy	Employment and activities in the Psychiatric institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific organisation • Often devaluated and institutionalising
Sheltered Employment	Employment and activities in specific workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific organisation in the context of protection • Usually not a real employment and does not lead to employment
Vocational Rehabilitation	Specific programmes to reach employment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation • Training on job searching • Professional training • Use of transitional employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used to reach employment • Less useful to maintain employment
Supported Employment	Employment in general companies with prolonged support by specific teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant success measured scientifically in the USA • Difficulties to generalise outside (?)
Social Firms	Employment in specific enterprises in the open market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advantages of sheltered and supported employment • Good results in Europe but without experimental evidence

Andalusia

1 of 17 Autonomous Regions
in Spain

18% of the territory and the
population of Spain

Region traditionally "less
developed"

Psychiatric Reform of 1984:

Closure of 8
Psychiatric Hospitals

Mental Health Services
in the Andalusian Health
Service (SAS)

Resources for Social Support
in a public Foundation
(FAISEM)



	Andalusia	Spain
Territory	87.561 Km ²	504.540 Km ²
Population	8.059.461	45.200.737

The Andalousian employment program

❑ Public Services for Mental Health and Social Support Services

- Community Mental Health Teams / Rehabilitation Units
- Social Support Resources (housing, occupation...)
- Rehabilitation, social skills, stimulation and orientation

❑ Orientation and Support in Employment (SOAE)

- FAISEM
- Co-ordinated with the Andalousian Employment Service
- Orientation, vocational rehabilitation, professional training, support in looking for work and retaining it

❑ Social Firms

- Co-ordinator: IDEA S.A.
- Stable employment
- Feasibility Demonstration

❑ Employment initiatives in private enterprises

- Networks by the SOAE
- Supported employment program

The Andalusian employment program. 2007

115	Workshops	2.251	Places
8	Vocational Guidance and Support Services (SOAE)	2.452	People served
		952	Work contracts
		321	People working
53	Professional training courses	261	Students
9	Social Firms	225	Workers with severe mental health problems
		137	Workers with another kind of disability
		455	WORKERS

Future Work

- ❑ To improve co-ordination with mental health services
 - To prevent job losses
 - To improve communication between sectors
- ❑ To improve the co-ordination with general services in employment
 - To increase access to general services
- ❑ To improve the quality of the work of SOAE
 - Personalised routes
 - Gender assessment
 - Population of small villages and rural zones
- ❑ Increase the employment capacity in social firms
- ❑ A pilot programme of supported employment

In conclusion, it is possible to employ people with serious mental disorders by a “recovery-oriented” system that we need taken into account the following aspects:

- ❑ The link with health and social care
- ❑ The organisation of general employment programmes and specific programmes for this group of people
- ❑ The creation of specific teams for orientation, vocational rehabilitation, employment support and the co-ordination with other professional services
- ❑ Utilisation of social firms, with legislative measures and layers of technical support, particularly in the first steps
- ❑ The need to supplement social firms with employment in general enterprises, with teams able to carry out flexible and long term support
- ❑ And, finally, the need to
 - fight against stigmatisation and discrimination
 - and to evaluate our interventions systematically