

## **BEST PRACTICES ROMANIA**

In the state medical system the care for the needs of the patients with mental problems are almost exclusively reduced to services of psychiatric medical type : hospital services, medication, services of psychiatric community based medical maintenance.

The care for the somatic health, has a lot to be desired because of the bias of the medical staff connected to the perception real raving of the physical, suffering of the people with mental illness, the lack of financial needs that these ones are facing, the negligence of medical staff, or the negligence of medical problems by patients themselves. The lack of partnership and the cooperation between psychiatric staff and family doctors or other specialists, represent the other factors which led to the degradation of the health of persons with problems of mental disabilities. Psychological services are very few and extremely remote available to this group. The people with problems of mental disabilities because of psychiatric symptoms are lacking the initiative and are usually leading a sedentary life. This fact is usually associated with obesity and cardiovascular problems.

The excessive consumption of coffee and cigarettes is affecting the respiratory system and cardiovascular system. Sometimes the secondary effect of psychiatric medication leads to a tendency to put on weight. In this context, ESTUAR Foundation, as community service for mental health keeps good relations with:

- a) the general health services (family doctors, general hospitals services)
- b) non- clinical services (local authorities, social and habitat departments, police, priests, shop owners, inhabitants associates, neighbors, radio and tv stations, groups that represent the families of beneficiaries people taking care of ill people directly and not in the last instant the volunteers.

### **Principles of Estuar Foundation**

- leading beneficiaries in undertaking risks and responsibilities normal in the process of personal decision
- to ensure the confidentiality of data received from beneficiaries
- to implement the respect for people regardless of their problems
- to ensure the right to privacy
- fight against discriminatory practices
- promoting equal chances for all community members

## Social Center for the day

### **Purpose:**

- Gives social services to adults with problems of mental health with the purpose of integrating them back in society.

### **Group Focus:**

- adults with problems of mental health
- caregivers, the family persons with problems of mental health and other members of local community, various specialists involved in problems of mental health and the life of community

### **The Model for Social Center**

It shows its efficiency by providing data of consults, support, representations, help in organizing and helping groups of support, promoting representations, empowering of people with problems of mental health

### **Case management:**

internal rules of conduct, beneficiaries, the receptions, evaluation, individual plan, monitoring, the exit from program, contract for providing the services

### **First contact with the beneficiaries**

#### *Sheet of sign up*

- identification dates of beneficiaries contact information, diagnostic, treatment, medic treating

#### *Sheet of primary evaluation*

- **social relations** ( with family, friends, how to built up his connections, to maintain relations, to avoid the company of friends who abuse drugs, how to avoid the behavior that infringes the rights of others or how to avoid problems with police, to trust the others )
- **emotional balance** (how to express anger, to control emotions, to overcome shyness, to eliminate the quilt emotions, to overcome depression, to express his real emotions, to avoid suicidal thoughts)
- **physical health** (how to keep his health and avoid consumption of drugs)

- **everyday activities problems** ( to keep a job, to administrate money, to take care of external look, to avoid boredom, to avoid judicial problems and where to go to
- **advice for involvement in activities**

*Sheet of evaluation in 5 directions*

1. **Status/ personal - significance** - activities, roles, goods that belong to him, other significant aspects
2. **Motivation** (how does he motivates, how is he motivated by others)
3. **Abilities** (**cognitive**: attention, concentration, clean thinking, solving problems; **communication**: listening, fluent talking, writing, reading, phone calling; **emotional**: he is overcoming distance and closeness, joy, humor, loosing, fear; **practical**: self care, eating and drinking, personal hygiene, dressing, care of mental health; **home care**: cleaning, shopping, money care; **day planning**: making a day schedule, keep the planned meetings; **transport; social integration**: going outside the house; accomplishment of shopping; the use of public and cultural facilities; **social abilities**: care for the others, request for information expressing personal opinions, accomplishments of plans receiving and sharing compliments; **abilities of understanding**: keep up with phantom illusions, stress full events.
4. **social support: emotional** - trust and appreciation; **instrumental** - practical assistance; **informative** - information and advice; **weighted** - shape up and feed back
5. **material support**: financial meets, habitat, utilities, personal resources transport means

**Individual planning**

1. **means for reintegration in society** (reintegration in work, training and others)
2. **means connected to recovering the abilities of independent life** (cooking, shopping, cleaning, personal hygiene,)
3. **Means connected to improving communication, the connection with others** (family, friends, authorities a.s.o.)
4. **Objectives connected to spending time alone or socializing**
5. **Objectives connected to improving health state**

**Connection with family**

social investigation; meetings with belonging relatives; individual talks

**Activities**

- evaluating the needs and monitoring the beneficiaries
- activities of counseling psycho-social-judicial and vocation

- therapy activity (communication, group, self-discovery, table tennis, music therapy, running, dance and exercise/warm up)
- washing room and small repair shop
- activities for recreation (musical audition, movie watch, talks about the movie, excursions, museum watch, expositions)
- social representation (in connection with medical staff, with the personnel of social assistance)
- planning manifestations, open to the public; paintings exposition, photo graphics, theater and dance shows, sports competitions, the distribution of informative materials, and the promotion of the rights for people with mental health problems

The activities take place weekly according to a day plan already established.

The sport activities are part of weekly activities included in the program of the institution. Some of them take place every day ( table tennis, morning exercises ) others are taking place every week.

## **Table tennis**

### **General Objectives and Specific Objectives**

- a) the development of motor abilities
- b) the development of abilities to develop a relationship
- c) the built up of self-esteem and confidence
- d) stimulating self initiative
- e) expressing feelings in an adequate manner and built up the resistance to frustration

### ***Objective: The development of motor abilities***

#### **Activity No 1: The running of the game of ping pong**

The activities of sport of the type of the game of ping-pong, are taking place on a daily basis, in the content of activities of the Social Center. In the hourly schedule established the space is prepared for the good running of the activity.

This activity is running for a few years in the daily schedule. In the beginning there were only a few members knowing the rules and the moves of the game. There are sessions of instructions and training for new comers. It starts with basics moves: how to handle the paddle tennis, how to hit the ball, learning how to put the ball in play, how to hit the ball. For the advanced ones the following moves are exercised: *topspin* (gives the ball a forward move), *backspin* (gives the ball a move backward), *loop* (the offensive hit with plenty of topspin), *drive* (the hit with medium or fast speed and little topspin), *smash* (maximum speed with no topspin), *flip* (right hit no topspin executed on the table

in which the move is short from "poignier"), *blockage* (short hit on the table against the speed ball with topspin. The paddle tennis is placed on the ball trajectory with a close angle to keep it in play keeping a low trajectory), *against* ( medium or high speed ball on the table used against a high speed ball with plenty of topspin).

Today almost all beneficiaries of the center play ping pong some at the level of advanced players. They are inviting one another to play. Their reasons are varied: just to move a bit, to lose weight, to spend some quality time, to prove how good they are in making special shots, to keep physical shape and arguments and so on.

***Objective: The built up of abilities of connecting.***

***Activity No 2: The running of the game of ping pong individual and in teams.***

To play ping pong involves interaction with another player. The game is individual or in team. Choosing your partner to play with, choosing your partner in team, to raise the prospect of playing a game the interaction with the others beneficiaries, volunteers or paid personnel. During the game beneficiaries talk, exchange opinions jokes are made. The atmosphere is relaxed and cordial. Apart from the involved participants at the activity there are others participating or supporters of the players waiting for their turn to play at the table tennis.

***Objectives: Built up of self-esteem and confidence.***

***Activity No 1: Playing ping pong on score***

Keeping the score in a game of ping pong stimulates the participants to concentrate on the game to obtain a good score. Winning the game helps also in the built up of self-esteem motivates him to keep playing to keep his position in the hierarchy of good players or to want to improve his performance on the game.

***Activity No 2: Planning every now and then competitions and rewarding the winners.***

From time to time we plan for contests of ping pong to take place on categories : beginners and advanced, individual and in teams so all beneficiaries have the opportunity to play and to win. The games are selected in a draw. The competitions are stimulating for the players. For some it is very important to win, others are interested to interact and enjoy the participation. For every contest players train very hard hoping to get a good result to improve on a specific technique or a particular shot. The contests are planned either between the members of the center or our players against other players of other organization (The Association of the Deaf in Romania. At the end of every contest the winners are rewarded. Pictures are taken and about the contest and their achievement it is written in the center's publication. The pictures with the winners

and from the running of the contest are printed and showed at the center's photo panel.

*Objective: Stimulating self initiative*

*Activity No 1: Training activities*

The beneficiaries advanced and experienced in the game of ping pong are encouraged to train and teach the new comers who expressed the desire to play and learn.

**Activity No 2: Involving the beneficiaries in the administrative activities regarding the game of ping pong.**

Beneficiaries are encouraged to have initiative in planning daily activities of table tennis so they are involved in the activities of preparing periodic contests. They are engaged and responsible for maintaining the equipment: tennis table, paddle tennis, balls and the purchase of new ones when is required.

*Objective: the showing of feelings in an adequate manner and the built up of resistance to frustration*

*Activity: Professional advice and support in controlling emotions and behavior.*

The practice of sport in general and table tennis in particular brings a lot of joy, satisfaction, a sentiment of plenitude of self-value but also fatigue frustration and sorrow, sometimes anger expressed or just felt. In a room where table tennis is played the atmosphere vibrates with the energy of the players and the game. Sometimes though the tension and frustration "hangs in the air." The individual psychological cooling down of the individual and the support in controlling the flow of emotions provided by the centers specialists helps the beneficiaries to overcome the tense moments and to control the feeling of frustration and fury. They learn to do that not just at the game of table tennis but also in every day of their life.

## **Results based on straight observation**

- a. general mobility raised
- b. physical shape and muscular stamina increased
- c. attention, concentration, patience increased
- d. motor equilibrium enhanced
- e. reduction in the number of cigarettes
- f. the number of social interaction increased
- g. the number of friendship and partnership enhanced
- h. self confidence enhanced
- i. self esteem enhanced

- j. the built up of initiative and responsibility
- k. the raise of tolerance
- l. the built up of numbers of activities in team work
- m. Beneficiaries who left home just to play ping pong

### **Measured results**

- a. daily at least one hour of table tennis
- b. daily 6 beneficiaries play table tennis
- c. weekly at least 6 hours of table tennis
- d. monthly at least 20 beneficiaries play table tennis
- e. every year 2 contests of table tennis
- f. every year at least 24 participants at table tennis competitions
- g. every year at least 2 articles written in centers publication about the activity of table tennis held inside the Social Center

#### Promoting mental health through sports

The mission of the Estuar Foundation is to offer social and alternative options to adults with mental health problems, for their reintegration into the Romanian community. For the successful reintegration of the beneficiaries into the society, the Estuar Foundation offers a variety of services: counseling - psychological, psychiatric, social, vocational, legal; therapeutic activities; recreational activities; instructional-educational activities; sport activities; home counseling and so on.

The beneficiaries of the Estuar Foundation are adults with mental health problems, who follow a psychiatric treatment and who resort to the services of the foundation as an alternative to the classic care services offered by the hospital or by the state system.

#### **Running activity**

This activity is part of the foundation's program of activities, a program to which the beneficiaries can participate voluntarily and which is carried out under the coordination of one of the specialists of the foundation.

The main objective of this activity is to facilitate a better mental health for the beneficiaries of the foundation. Scientific studies show that sports such as running bring significant improvements in mood, reduces depressive symptoms and anxiety symptoms, provides better physical tone and better vitality.

Clinical studies show that exercise is an important recovery factor for symptoms of depression, anxiety symptoms, and improved cognitive functions in schizophrenia. Exercise can also be used as an effective tool in avoiding relapses in major depressive pathology, decreases the level of stress felt by the body and helps in relieving anxiety.

Participation in this activity is made according to the availability of the beneficiaries and each of them sets a goal according to the physical state, age, sports they previously practiced at and physical endurance.

Partner of the Estuar Foundation in this project was the organization Bucharest Running Club which facilitated the free registration of the beneficiaries at all the running events that take place in Bucharest.

## Methodology

Running groups have been held weekly starting with 2017 each spring and autumn of each year. The running groups took place in the community, in different parks in Bucharest, under the coordination of the Estuar Foundation psychologist. Apart from these meetings organized by the staff of the foundation, each beneficiary has made an individual training program which he followed in the free type

To motivate the beneficiaries were used the various running events in Bucharest to which the beneficiaries were registered.

The running group consisted of 11 people, ranging in age from 27 years to 60 years, 6 men and 5 women.

## Results

From the group of beneficiaries who participated in the training a number of 6 beneficiaries regularly participated in the events held in Bucharest, participating in 3 races per year of 10 km, and two of them participating in a semi-marathon race - 21 km, and as teams taking part in marathon competitions as a staffer. Also two of the beneficiaries participated in popular races on the distance of 3 km.

Improving self-esteem - the beneficiaries were able to consistently achieve their goals, which helped them to develop a healthy self-esteem.

Smoking Cessation - For one of the beneficiaries of the activity, running was a sufficiently important motivation to quit smoking and to adopt a healthier lifestyle /

Better physical condition - constant physical activity improves the general physical condition and helps the beneficiaries to have a better physical tone, to be more active and better able to perform their daily tasks.

The beneficiaries present at the running competitions were invited to write about the running experience in the Estuar Foundation magazine to share with others their experience and to

motivate other beneficiaries to run.

## **Bibliography**

1. Aylett, E., Small, N., & Bower, P. (2018). Exercise in the treatment of clinical anxiety in general practice - a systematic review and meta-analysis. *BMC health services research*, 18(1), 559. doi:10.1186/s12913-018-3313-5
2. Craft, L. L., & Perna, F. M. (2004). The Benefits of Exercise for the Clinically Depressed. *Primary care companion to the Journal of clinical psychiatry*, 6(3), 104–111. doi:10.4088/pcc.v06n0301
3. Vakhrusheva, J., Marino, B., Stroup, T. S., & Kimhy, D. (2016). Aerobic Exercise in People with Schizophrenia: Neural and Neurocognitive Benefits. *Current behavioral neuroscience reports*, 3(2), 165–175. doi:10.1007/s40473-016-0077-2
4. [www.estuar.org](http://www.estuar.org)

5. <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/healthy-living/the-mental-health-benefits-of-exercise.htm>