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PSYCHIATRY IN POLAND: TOWARD DEVELOPMENT

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Since collapse of communism in 1989, the Polish mental health system has moved through the long deinstitutionalization process, reducing number of beds in psychiatric hospitals. The system of occupational and rehabilitation psychiatry was virtually collapsed. Some psychiatric hospitals received EU financing programs and improved their standards. The morbidity of affective disorders, increased ten times in Poland same as non-alcohol dependencies. The current economic crisis did not mobilize professionals. Because of that, the Polish Psychiatric Association engaged in introducing the looking-forward National Program of Mental Health Care, which is currently underway in Poland (planned for 2011-2015). The Program is multi-focused, mainly creating basic psychiatric system of care, dispersed throughout the whole country, for residual psychotic patients, disabled people, alcohol dependents and dementia patients. However the plan does not constitute other parts of the system, like highly-specialized and expensive centers for patients with more complex diagnostic and therapeutic needs. Meantime, the Polish total spendings for psychiatry did not raise for the second year in a row. That's one of the lowest European levels of the financing psychiatry (3,3-3,5% of whole Healthcare spend). The number of psychiatrists in Poland (2500), clinical psychologists and psychotherapeutists is still low.

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