



PhD student:

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Research project:

The perception of rights and quality of care in mental health

Abstract:

Introduction: People with psychosocial disabilities often face serious violations of human rights. The United Nations has repeatedly denounced such discrimination at the global level, highlighting the systematic exclusion of these individuals from fundamental civil rights and from therapeutic decisions concerning them. The Covid-19 pandemic has further aggravated these vulnerabilities, highlighting the urgency of promoting more equitable services that respect individual dignity. In response to this need, the World Health Organization has promoted the QualityRights initiative, proposing a model of care based on the respect for human rights and personal dignity. Among the standardized tools proposed is the Well-Being at Work and Respect for Human Rights (WWRR) questionnaire, useful for assessing the perception of well-being, quality of care, and respect for rights within healthcare services.

Objectives: The research project aims to explore how users, healthcare professionals, and caregivers perceive respect for human rights and quality of care in mental health services, comparing these perceptions in national, regional, and international contexts. Specifically, in the thesis project, perceptions will be compared among the different categories of participants (users, caregivers, and professionals) and between mental health services and other (non-psychiatric) healthcare services present in the Sardinia Region.

The final aim of the survey is to promote a rights-based culture within services, validate assessment tools in new linguistic contexts, and compare data with that from other healthcare sectors, in order to identify strengths and weaknesses in current care models.

Methodology: The study has an observational, cross-sectional, and multicenter design. The WWRR questionnaire will be administered to users, professionals, and caregivers to assess satisfaction with the care received and the perception of respect for rights. Additionally, a battery of self-administered questionnaires (BRIAN, SF-12, PHQ-9) will be administered only to the professional category to investigate quality of life, the presence of depressive symptoms, and the regulation of biological rhythms. Statistical analysis using parametric and non-parametric techniques will allow a preliminary evaluation of the investigated parameters, enabling comparisons between different regions and countries regarding mental health care; between psychiatric and other healthcare services; and among the various healthcare services present in the Sardinia Region, to highlight any gaps.

Expected results: It is expected to highlight differences and similarities, at the national and international levels, in the perception of quality of care and respect for rights in mental health services. It is hypothesized that these services may offer a more positive experience compared to other healthcare settings, despite organizational challenges. Furthermore, the



usefulness of the WWRR questionnaire as a reliable tool for assessing well-being and promoting more equitable, person-centered care models is expected to be confirmed.

Conclusions: The study will contribute to a better understanding of the relationship between quality of care, staff well-being, and respect for human rights in mental health services. The results may guide organizational and training interventions, encouraging the adoption of more equitable, participatory, and dignity-respecting care models.

Furthermore, the dissemination of the WWRR tool in international contexts will allow for a shared and comparable evaluation of care quality.