

Assessment of the Organization of Mental Health Care in Primary Health Care

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Abstract

The provision of mental care for patients who visit primary healthcare facilities is the topic of this article. The authors examine the data that demonstrate a consistent decline in this type of care's accessibility in recent years in both Tashkent and Uzbekistan. The authors describe the findings of an investigation, which demonstrate that patients at territorial general polyclinics have a sizable need for psychotherapy (psychiatric) care. The authors also suggest strategies for the growth of this type of care.

1. Introduction

The results of recent studies indicate that the frequency of clinically defined mental disorders in the contingents of patients in primary health care institutions is at least 30%, which allows us to speak of an extremely wide distribution, reaching the level of an epidemic. These disorders often accompany somatic diseases, which complicates differential diagnosis, negatively affects compliance and leads to a decrease in the quality of life of patients. In addition, mental disorders and adverse psychosocial circumstances often act as powerful pathogenic factors in the onset and progression of somatic diseases. They have a negative impact on medical workers who are not ready for contact with mentally ill people, which contributes to their burnout and leads to an increase in public dissatisfaction with the quality of medical care. With this in mind, the task

of improving mental health care in primary health care is particularly acute.

Engaging primary health care capabilities (proximity to the community, accessibility, preventive and rehabilitative capacity, reduced stigma) will significantly improve the detection and treatment of mental disorders and will have a beneficial effect on the mental health of the population as a whole. Therefore, the reform of psychiatric care cannot be limited to the traditionally established system of psychiatric services.

The difficulties of mental health care in the primary health care in our country are evidenced by the data of an international study that was devoted to the specifics of the treatment of depressive conditions in the primary health care. In a comparative aspect, the corresponding indicators were evaluated in six countries (Spain, Israel, Australia, Brazil, the USA

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and Russia). It was found that the treatment of depression in different centers was carried out with unequal frequency. Most often (41.0% of observations) it was carried out in Seattle (USA), and least often (in 4.0%) in St. Petersburg (Russia). Most often, such patients came to the attention of psychiatrists or psychotherapists in Melbourne (Australia) - 31%. In our country, however, the coverage of patients with counseling work by mental health professionals was the smallest.

2. Methods

Other examples are the difficulties with the development of uniform curricula for psychotherapy, the shortage of teachers, as well as the difficulties of certifying specialists. A number of facts testify to the general low level of training of psychotherapists and poor working conditions. A serious problem is the organizational and methodological gap with general psychiatry, which remained under federal jurisdiction, as well as the lack of certainty in relations with medical psychologists and social services.

It seems that the reasons for the current situation are connected not only with the socio-economic crisis and insufficient funding for the psychiatric service. To a large extent, they are due to the continuing underestimation of the importance of the mental health problem in the implementation of public health policy and the outdated system of postgraduate training for doctors.

It should be borne in mind that modern healthcare is becoming more and more focused on improving the quality of life of patients. The solution of related issues is not possible without a corresponding improvement in the socio-psychological conditions of patients' lives and the use of psychological factors in the treatment and rehabilitation process. Of paramount importance is adherence to the treatment regimen and psychological adaptation of patients to lifestyle changes that occur with the development of chronic diseases and accompanying psychopathological conditions. In this regard, the tasks of raising the awareness of general practitioners on the issues of identifying in individual cases, in agreement with a consulting psychiatrist - the treatment of non-psychotic mental disorders, improving the communication skills of

these specialists and psychological competence, as well as mastering the principles of professional ethics, become of great importance. So far, Uzbekistan has not formed a category of primary network physicians with at least a short-term postgraduate training in mental health.

Data for the Republic of Uzbekistan are taken from the collections "Statistical materials on the activities of healthcare institutions of the Republic of Uzbekistan" by the RIAC of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Uzbekistan and "Health of the population and healthcare in the Republic of Uzbekistan" by the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the State Committee on Statistics of the Republic of Uzbekistan (2021), as well as from the data of the Information and Analytical Center, the State Department of Statistics and ORC Macro "Study of the Health of the Population of Uzbekistan 2021".

3. Results

The number of persons suffering from mental disorders registered at the dispensary at the end of 2019 amounted to 276197, of which 6102 were under guardianship, 3481 had previously committed socially dangerous acts or with a high risk of committing socially dangerous acts and were on special registration. Of the 362 persons who committed offenses during the year, 154 were not previously on special records, which indicates the need to strengthen control (primarily) over the identification of persons with a high risk of committing socially dangerous acts.

A serious problem remains the issue of the growth in the number of disabled people suffering from mental disorders, the number of which (in comparison with 1991 (44207)) increased by 2.6 times and amounted to in 2019. 115669. That is, 40.4% of patients on the dispensary psychiatric register are disabled. High rates of disability indicate a low level of treatment and rehabilitation activities, which in turn complicates the burden of mental disorders. The number of persons registered with dispensaries and under consultative supervision in psycho-neurological institutions of the republic increased until 2010 (from 259,919 (1991) to 369,840 (2010)), in subsequent years it decreased and in 2019. amounted to 331198.

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The prevalence rate of mental disorders among the population of the republic with a dispensary registration group and those under advisory supervision over the past 11 years (2008 - 1333.1) has been decreasing, amounting to 994.5 per 100 thousand population in 2019. To provide out-of-hospital psychiatric care in 2019, 14 neuropsychiatric dispensaries and 6 dispensary departments operated at psychiatric hospitals (Namangan, Samarkand, Surkhandarya No. 1, Fergana regional No. 1 (Fergana), No. 2 (Kokand) and a clinical psychiatric hospital Ministry of Health) for 2085 visits per shift. In recent years, there has been a decrease in the percentage of staffing of allocated positions of psychiatrists, which on average in the republic in 2019 amounted to 87.6%, that is, 1.05 times less than in 2010 (1.9). The training of specialists for the psychiatric service is carried out at the departments of psychiatry of the Tashkent Institute for the Improvement of Doctors, the Tashkent Medical Academy, Andijan, Bukhara, Samarkand and Tashkent Pediatric Medical Institutes with branches in the Republic of Karakalpakstan (Nukus) and Khorezm region (Urgench). One of the important aspects of outpatient therapy for mental patients is psychopharmacotherapy. Irregular use of psychotropic drugs on an outpatient basis leads to an exacerbation of mental disorders, the risk of committing socially dangerous acts, the formation of a personality defect, social maladaptation, and repeated hospitalization. The cost of maintenance therapy per patient per year after discharge from a psychiatric hospital increased slightly - from 10241.57 soums (2015) to 34712 soums (2019) or 3.3 times, the percentage of satisfaction in psychotropic drugs was in 2019 . only 60%. The results of the analysis and assessment of the implementation of the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated March 16, 2018. No. 1111-3606 "On measures to radically improve the system of providing psychiatric care" indicates that in 2018 active measures were taken to improve the legislative and regulatory framework, improve the training of psychiatric service personnel. Legislative acts adopted by the Oliy Majlis and Government decisions of the Republic, enshrined in the orders of the Ministry of Health in their development, make it possible to prevent violations of human rights and discrimination, and empower people with mental

disorders. The implementation of the plan of practical measures of the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated March 16, 2018 No. PP-3606 has significantly improved the state of the material and technical base of psychiatric institutions, the quantity and quality of training of psychiatric specialists, as well as the conditions of detention and treatment of people suffering from mental disorders. International relations and cooperation in the field of mental health are being strengthened, which indicates the democratization of the psychiatric service of the Republic. New forms of specialized care for children with disabilities have appeared, and a number of other positive developments have been noted in the prevention and strengthening of the mental health of the population of the Republic. In pursuance of the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated March 16, 2018. "On measures to radically improve the system of providing psychiatric care" the following activities were carried out. The order of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. 47 dated August 8, 2018 "On approval of the list of services by private enterprises for the provision of diagnostics and treatment for people with mental and behavioral disorders" was issued. The procedure for recording and dynamic monitoring of persons suffering from mental disorders has been developed and approved (Registered by the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Uzbekistan on August 28, 2018, Registration No. 3062). Letter No. 10-5/1226 of 04.06.2018 on the inventory has been submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers. An inventory of all orders and other departmental acts in the field of providing psychiatric care was carried out for their relevance in the current conditions (paragraph 2 of the plan of practical measures for the implementation of the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated March 16, 2018 No. -3606). A draft Law "On Psychiatric Care" has been developed in a new edition, which provides, among other things, for the development of private medicine in this area, the creation of additional favorable conditions for people suffering from mental disorders, which was submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers by letter No. 10-5/3172 dated 05.09.2018 . Considered at two hearings of the meeting of the Oliy Majlis, after revision it will be considered at the third hearing (paragraph 3 of the plan of practical measures for the implementation of the Government of the Republic

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of Uzbekistan dated March 16, 2018 No. -3606). A regulation has been developed on medical and industrial enterprises of psychiatric institutions for occupational therapy, training in new professions and employment at these enterprises of persons suffering from mental disorders, including persons with disabilities, which (Order of the Ministry of Health) was submitted for approval by the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Economics, and also in the State Competition Committee by letter 16.08.2018 10-5/3009. According to the remark of the State Competition Committee, a draft Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers has been developed. The project was approved by the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Economy, the Ministry of Labor and the State Competition Committee. A response was received from the PPP Agency stating that the adoption of the project is expedient after the adoption of the Law on PPP (11/23/2018 10-5/4126). Submitted to the Ministry of Justice, according to the comments of the Ministry of Justice, the project is being finalized. After the adoption of the relevant document (PKM), medical and industrial enterprises will be organized, that is, paragraph 15 of the plan of practical measures will be executed (paragraph 5 of the plan of practical measures for the implementation of 1111 of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated March 16, 2018 No. -3606). The Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated February 13, 2019 No. PP-4190 "On approval of the concept for the development of the mental health service of the population of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2019-2025" was signed (paragraph 24 of the plan of practical measures for the implementation of the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated March 16, 2018 No. -3606). The main objectives of the Concept are to increase the availability, efficiency and quality of psychiatric care, reduce the social and economic burden of mental disorders, and achieve maximum satisfaction of the population with the provided medical diagnostic and medical rehabilitation care. A set of measures aimed at early detection, diagnosis and treatment of children with mental disorders and behavioral disorders in primary health care, obstetrics, pediatrics, and screening centers has been developed and approved.

4. Discussion

Together with specialists from the Ministry of Health, the Women's Committee, the Youth Union, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Higher Education, 2 programs were broadcast on central and local television, 31 radio programs, and 1033 booklets and 1760 reminders were distributed. A number of other organizational measures have been taken to implement the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan. At the same time, despite the positive developments in the field of mental health and other regulatory frameworks over the past few years, insufficient funding for the psychiatric service has affected the quality of medical and social assistance provided to people suffering from mental and behavioral disorders. Also, additions were made to the nomenclature of specialties and positions of psychiatric institutions with the specialties "specialist in social work", "special worker" and "state forensic psychologist" with the development of tariff-qualified characteristics, regulations and training programs with their subsequent inclusion in the staffing standards of psychiatric institutions. During the years of sovereignty (including preventive examinations) the number of people visiting psychiatric institutions increased by 5.5 times, the observed contingent of people with mental disorders and the number of those hospitalized in a psychiatric hospital - by 1.3 times (compared to 1991).

5. Conclusion

Given the resource and staff shortages, it is important today to bring psychiatric care closer to the population by integrating psychiatric care into primary health care by revising approaches to teaching the skills of providing psychiatric care to general practitioners, family doctors, district therapists and paramedical workers. Psychiatric disorders can have severe consequences for both patients and their families. For the patient, the consequences are the distress caused by the symptoms, reduced quality of life, loss of independence and disability, and impaired social integration. For the family and for society as a whole, this is an increase in the costs caused by the need to care for the sick, and a decrease in economic productivity.

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In order to level the current situation, in accordance with the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated February 13, 2019 No. PP-4190 "On approval of the concept for the development of the mental health service of the population of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2019-2025", a number of organizational measures are provided that will solve a number of tasks facing the psychiatric service of the Republic.

Thus, the provision of psychotherapeutic (psychiatric) care to patients in primary health care is declining. Despite the great need for it, there is a decrease in the number of psychotherapeutic rooms and the number of psychiatrists working in them, which indicates the need to change the methodology, organization, funding, and structure of psychotherapeutic (psychiatric) care in primary health care.

To date, the tasks of increasing its accessibility and bringing psychiatric care closer to the population remain unresolved. Health leaders at various levels underestimate the importance of mental health problems. The country has not formed a special system for training psychiatrists and psychotherapists for primary health care institutions. Psychiatrists and psychotherapists have little training in somatic medicine and medical psychology. The level of knowledge and skills of district therapists on mental health issues is still does not meet the needs of providing assistance to persons with mental disorders to a greater extent. Significant gaps remain in organizational approaches to the provision of psychotherapeutic (psychiatric) care in primary health care.

Increasing the role of psychiatrists in the general medical network will make it possible to bring psychotherapeutic care closer to the population, diagnose diseases at an early stage, prevent the development of severe forms of mental pathology, and solve an important task of modern healthcare to improve the quality of life of patients. A necessary condition is to take into account psychological factors in the occurrence and progression of various forms of somatic diseases, as well as the use of modern psychotherapeutic and psychopharmacological methods in the treatment and rehabilitation process.

The creation of psychiatric (psychotherapeutic) care in the general medical network, and especially in the primary care, corresponding to the needs of the population and modern methodology for providing medical care, requires significant efforts from both healthcare organizers, psychiatric specialists, and somatic doctors.

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