Neapolis University

HEPHAESTUS Repository **http://hephaestus.nup.ac.cy**

School of Health Sciences Conference papers

2011-05

Attitudes and perceptions of general population towards mental illness; drawing future mental health services

Panayiotopoulos, Christos

Editografica

http://hdl.handle.net/11728/6837

Downloaded from HEPHAESTUS Repository, Neapolis University institutional repository

HEPHAESTUS
Research Repository

Title:	Attitudes and perceptions of general population towards mental illness; drawing future mental health services
Year:	2011
Author:	Panayiotopoulos Christos, Pavlakis Andreas,
Abstract:	Despite the magnitude of mental health problems worldwide, many cases of deinstitutionalization have failed to achieve their targets for a number of reasons including lack of appropriate community psychiatric services and lack of knowledge of new approaches. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to identify the attitudes, beliefs, and mental health literacy of mental health professionals and the general population toward mental illness. **Method**: The Attitudes toward Severe Mental Illness (ASMI) scale was administered in both mental health professionals (n = 311) and to the general population (n = 933) to compare stereotypes and optimism with regard to mental health patients and their abilities to integrate into the society. **Results**: The results indicate that the general population holds less negative stereotypes (M = 2.55, SD = 0.61) than mental health professionals (M = 1.93, SD = 0.59), t(734) = 13.34, p < .001, d = 1.04. However, mental health professionals are less optimistic about the competences of a patient with a mental illness (M = 1.92, SD = 0.61) than the general population (M = 2.2, SD = .37), t(854) = 8.1, p < .001, d = .56. **Discussion:** The use of scales such as the ASMI not only make it possible to map out attitudes and views but also to measure mental health professionals' beliefs toward inclusion of these people. Results indicate that the core of the treatment needs to be shifted from the medical compliance to the satisfaction of psycho-social needs of service users. Finally, targeted educational programs targeted at secondary education and at young adults may lead to lower rates of social isolation and include more incidents of social integration.

Neapolis University
HEPHAESTUS Repository https://hephaestus.nup.ac.cy