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## **NEUROPSYCHIATRIC NURSING HOME CARE FOR ADULTS WITH MENTAL DISABILITIES IN RUSSIA**

The research of practices of care for persons with mental disabilities in Russia was actualized by the Federal Law N 442-FZ from 12\28\2013 “On the Basis of Social Services to Citizens in the Russian Federation” entering into force on January, 1, 2015, the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). According to the norms of the law the social welfare system is to be reformed, each region is given the opportunity to create a unique register of social service providers, service recipients (clients) are endowed with the right to choose a necessary set of social services and service providers.

The international and Russian practices of independent living and residential care for persons with mental disabilities, their researches indicate the need for reform of restrictive settings, e.g. placement of adults with mental disabilities in community settings rather than in institutions such as neuropsychiatric nursing homes (L. Dominelli, D. Zaviršek, E.R. Iarskaya-Smirnova, P.V. Romanov, et al.) [2; 5; 6; 9]. At the same time, this reform process must be well thought out, focused on regional specificity, aimed at providing persons with mental disabilities the possibility of choosing the best form of housing and care.

According to Russian Disability NGO “Perspektiva” “mental disability” is a generic term for intellectual disability and mental disorders, although they are of different nature and causes. Russian legislation also does not divide people with intellectual and mental disorders. In our opinion, the term «mental disability» is less stigmatizing.

In Russia many neuropsychiatric nursing homes for persons with mental disabilities were set up in the 1950-1960s [2; 8]. This trend was a sequent of the increasing number of people suffering from various forms of mental disorders, including ones who were the effects of the Great Patriotic War, the lack of those willing to take care of these people. Also placing mentally disabled people in the neuropsychiatric nursing homes was the way to solve social problems by means of

exclusion and marginalization. Prolonged existence of neuropsychiatric nursing homes in appalling conditions and poverty both represented the state's attitude towards this category of people and made for the fastening of forms of inhuman attitude to those most in need of care.

The humanization process of attitude to people with mental disabilities in the 21st century contributed to the improvement of living conditions in many nursing homes [11; 12].

Modern living conditions of residents of neuropsychiatric nursing homes are focused on bringing the feel of home to the inhabitants. However, the planning of neuropsychiatric nursing homes, large rooms for the large numbers of people, old buildings, the established order of life that does not change much from one nursing home to another are not able to provide the feeling of being home.

Nowadays neuropsychiatric nursing homes are institutions where people live for 15-20 years until the end of their lives. At the same time not enough money are allocated to improve living conditions in neuropsychiatric nursing homes. The residents have to be in conditions that do not contribute to rehabilitation and socialization. These conditions are the sameness of setting, the monotony of everyday life, the lack of interesting activities and communication with able-bodied persons, dependence on personnel [3; 4].

Prohibition to go beyond the territory of the neuropsychiatric nursing home is not based on the legal acts of the Russian Federation. It conflicts with the Russian Constitution and the Art. 5 of the Federal Law "On Psychiatric Care and Guarantees of Citizens' Rights during Its Provision": "Restriction of the rights and freedoms of people with mental disorders only on the basis of a psychiatric diagnosis or the fact of being under medical observation in a psychiatric hospital or mental institution for social protection or special education is not allowed" [1]. Nevertheless, the practice of movement restrictions is ubiquitous.

Analysis of practices of care for people with mental disabilities has revealed that the only function of neuropsychiatric nursing home is to allow the long stay for people with mental disabilities and ensure their social and domestic services.

We have to agree with the statement of N.F. Dementieva, that the rights of people living in neuropsychiatric nursing home of inclusion, independent living, their own family, employment, education, etc. are constantly violated almost everywhere, hence the need to reform [3].

Moreover, due to the ratification of Convention on the Rights of Disabled Persons the natural right of mentally disabled people to live in the community received legal confirmation in the Russian legislation for the first time. Specific activities at the political level are needed to fulfill this right of more than one hundred thousands of mentally disabled people living in neuropsychiatric nursing homes and deprived of any access to the society life [7].

The fulfillment of the rights of persons with mental disabilities, guaranteed in the Convention, requires the State to show political will and make a number of policy decisions focused on these issues. The development of other residential care options, possibilities of independent and supported living of people with mental disabilities should be ones of these policy decisions.

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