

P01-355 - ELDERLY CHRONIC MENTAL ILL PATIENTS IN COMMUNITY RESIDENCE UNITS

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Objectives: The study intends to present the problems of elderly patients living in community residences, and the difficulties of staff and other residents. Solutions are also suggested.

Methods: Within the attempt of dwindling big psychiatric hospitals in Greece, and removing social and professional exclusion of patients, long-term supportive living units were established in 2001 by the General Hospital of Ioannina. Eleven patients were selected from the Psychiatric Hospital of Corfu, according to their functionality, medication compliance, and ability to take care of themselves. During the eight years of the unit's operation, four patients were forwarded in a supported flat where living is more independent. However, five psychotic patients, aged over 65, displayed new physical health problems, and deterioration of preexisting problems (epilepsy, chronic respiratory disease, kidney cancer). New disorders included hypertension, metabolic syndrome, hurt diseases, etc. The patient who suffered from respiratory disease died, an epileptic returned to the psychiatric hostel after 3 years in the protected flat, and the patient with the kidney cancer moved in a unit with more staff support.

Results: Difficulties faced by elderly influenced hostel's operation and younger patients, and preoccupied staff, depriving time from creative activities with patients. Furthermore, residents' strain for physical health problems increased.

Conclusions: To secure regular operation of supported living units, a network of complementary units is necessary, which will forward to high supported units elderly patients who face serious health problems, or are not up to the everyday activities of the unit they live in.