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Mental Health Services and COVID-19 Pandemic: what do the professionals think?

Italy was the first European country to face the Covid-19 pandemic and to implement a very strict lockdown in the spring of 2020. The lockdown came suddenly and had a significant impact on the functioning of psychiatric services causing significant changes.

These transformations have had inevitable consequences for users, staff and the general population. It was therefore necessary to understand what has happened, what has worked and what has not worked, in an attempt to transform this dramatic crisis into an opportunity for positive evolution. To address this problem, we developed an ad hoc questionnaire to find out what the professionals thought about the new organization and how they felt at that time. The questionnaire, not validated, was accessible on the WAPR Italy website. The questionnaire included five questions for demographic characteristics, role and setting of the professionals and eight multiple-choice questions concerning opinions about the service activity in the lockdown. The responses highlighted some specific issues such as: the opportunity to adopt remote support through the use of technologies; the need to implement personalized and non-standardized therapeutic projects; the overriding need to promote social inclusion and avoid the isolation of residential facilities. These and other topics will be presented and discussed during the presentation.