



World Mental Health Day 2009
Cyprus Nurses Association

Des Kavanagh
President Horitio,
European Psychiatric Nurses

WHO Helsinki Declaration

- Mental Health Action Plan for Europe
- Facing the Challenges, Building Solutions

Principles 1

- Promote Well Being For All
- Demonstrate Centrality of Mental Health
- Tackle Stigma and Discrimination
- Promote Activities sensitive to vulnerable life stages
- Prevention of Mental Health Problems and Suicide
- Ensure Access to Good Primary Care for Mental Health Problems

Principles 2

- Offer effective Community Care for people with Severe Mental Health Problems.
- Establish Partnerships across Sectors.
- Create a Sufficient and Competent Workforce
- Establish good mental health information
- Provide fair and Adequate Funding
- Evaluate Effectiveness and Generate new evidence
- Milestones for Achievement.

Focus : Primary Care

- Reports : Mental health issues 3rd most common reason for attending GP.
- Many opportunities to intervene early are missed.
- Too often anti-depressants and anxiolytics prescribed prematurely and carelessly.
- Primary Care mental health nurses essential.

What Does Helsinki Accord Call For?

- Parity of Funding
- Good access for all to Primary Care Mental Health services.
- Capacity to detect and treat in primary care by increasing nos. and skills of P.C. staff
- Provide Psychotherapeutic interventions in P.C. for all mental health problems.
- Design and implement treatment and referral protocols

Irish Examples

- Some core members of PC Teams
- Others reach in to PC
- Ad HOC Pilots with GPs
- A&E Mental Health Nurses
- Crisis Nurses
- Child and Adolescent Community Triage
- Community adult services triage

Role of Mental Health Nurse in Primary Care

- Health Promotion
- Early Assessment
- Triage
- Crisis Intervention
- Liaison Role with Secondary Care
- Expert advisory role for GPs, patients and their families

Absence of the Mental Health Nurse in Primary Care

- Inappropriate prescription of medications.
- Denial of other or complementary treatment options.
- Lost opportunities.
- Growing frustration and complaints from patients.
- Patients get more sick, conditions get more complicated, later, dependence on Secondary Care

One Pilot : West Cork, Rural Ireland

- Psych. Nurse assigned to GP Practices :
- Bring mental health skills to GP surgery.
- Improve communication between Primary and Secondary Services.
- Reduce Stigma.
- Improve mental health of population.
- Provide screening and triage.
- Provide short term counselling.

Continued

- Provide support and advice .
- Provide information on care options/services.
- Enhance liaison.
- Single/easy point of access.
- Health promotion.

Evaluation of Pilot

- Huge Success.
- 41% patients: managed by nurse- discharged
- More GPs have joined scheme.
- Patients satisfaction rating 80.8%

Main referral conditions were :

Depression, anxiety, OCD, Addictions,
Bereavement, Relationship difficulties.

Other Examples

- Other Reports demonstrate :
- Reduced referral rates to Psychiatrists
- Nurse addressing unmet needs.
- Decreased prescription of anti-depressants etc.
- GP Satisfaction.
- Improved mental health of patients.
- Service responsive to patients needs(Bouger 2008)

- Co-morbidity : Addiction/ Mental Illness.
- Often one treated in isolation from the other, unsuccessfully. (Mc Gabhann et al 2004
- Primary Care Mental Health Nurse ideally placed to identify and intervene.
- Nurse –led outpatient detox programme.
- Nurse prescribing an additional benefit.

The Future ?

- If we believe the research we must embrace Primary Care.
- Governments must invest in Primary Care.
- Undergraduate training should be reviewed.
- Post – Grad courses to enhance skills in ‘Talking Therapies’, Nurse –prescribing etc.