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This issue of NRSP is entirely dedicated to the aim of explaining Italian experiences regarding the identification and early intervention on psychoses.

We have thought of it in order to build a mosaic, as we have defined it in the request presented to the authors, whose structure made of different tesserae should be able readers to understand what are the latest news in clinical practice related to this area.

Indeed, the authors were requested to provide a description of their experience related to the topic of early psychosis, enlightening the most significant and original features: information, training, clinical attitude, intervention procedures, instruments used for assessment and treatment, ecc.

We wanted our readers not to be given a repetitious and monotonous list of experiences, and decided to create a "space" prompting a choral participation of clinicians and specialists working in Mental Health Services, stimulating them to reflect on their professional activity, make comparisons with other professionals' practice and experience, in order to create the chance for a debate with readers.

We were convinced, and still we are, that a deep critical reflection both on the doctrinal and practical (operational) aspects and features of our services, as well as on their functioning and purposes, could not be delayed any longer.

It appears particularly important to convey a renewed vision of mental health, oriented towards the more manifest areas of needs, with the guide of solid scientific and clinical bases built up, even if often neglected, in the last two decades.

Services operating with mental illness should amplify and consolidate the link between patients' demands and needs (attention provided to their necessities, careful caregiving and support, quick and scientifically reliable answers, operative attitude based on solving concrete problems, clear explanation and information, collaboration between specialists) and what they are actually able to provide.

The so-called early intervention synthesizes what we said before and deals with that issue from a preventive perspective, guided by scientific knowledge. It represents a challenge aimed at reorienting Italian mental health services, born more than 30 years ago due to the new laws regarding psychiatric care, towards a point of view focused on prevention and therapy, able to go beyond the traditional and more common rehabilitative attitude.

Traditional psychiatric care and treatment seems too dependent on ideologies, conservatory praxes, pessimistic conceptions and lack of interest and drive towards new perspectives; instead of looking at future developments it's more concentrated on the past, without being adequately influenced by the important contributions coming from recent research.

Epidemiologic studies (addressing prevalence and incidence data regarding mental disorders as well as the efficacy of treatments and rehabilitation procedures and techniques) and modern findings coming from neurosciences, have opened new perspectives, which definitely deserve to be explored with curiosity, contributing to confirm the validity of bio-psycho-social modal (1,2,3,4,5 and 6).

We hope this issue of NRSP will be judged as coherent and useful by our readers, and we would like to imagine and present it not as the conclusion of a work, but as a new beginning aimed at prompting other clinicians to present and discuss their own clinical experience and activity, in order to develop and improve the workers' knowledge and practical skills, as well as the ability to answer properly to patients' demands.

Contributions regard a wide range of topics, with a special focus on young adult age and adolescence, as well as the connections and cooperation between different agencies and services, the procedures and methods regarding the assessment process and acceptance to services, the need to experiment and improve information on the subject, without forgetting to analyze social and familial environment.

In our opinion the first three contributions deal mostly with organizational aspects; the following three -4,5 and 6- underline, through models, the importance of cooperation and collaboration between different kinds of agencies and services, and these topics are more deeply analyzed in the following four models - 7,8,9,10-; adolescence is given a fundamental role in contributions 11 and 12; articles from 13 to 16 focus mainly on the importance of prevention.

Another group treats training, information and dissemination -17 and 18-; the article 19 concentrates on families' involvement in treatment programs, whereas contribution number 20 deals with the topic of collaboration between public and social private services; the 21st talks about an original residential experience.

The last three articles are dedicated to "structured clinical practice" and research -22-, the following article describes the procedure needed to collect and use data properly -23-, whereas the last one -24- is related to a research strongly connected to clinical practice: it's the most important study not only in Italy, but even in the world. (7)

In conclusion we are willing to add that this issue of NRSP has been thought as an ideal continuation of the recently appeared volume whose initial success and appreciation prompted us to produce this new work (8); it can also be regarded as a prelude to a recent new survey, following the previous (9) realized by the Italian Association of Early Intervention in Psychosis (AIPP), special section of SIP, just concluded and whose data are still being elaborated and confronted with the results come from another study (10).

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