

# Continuity of care in mental health (australia)

Sociology



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Wierdsma, Mulder, de Vries & Sytema (2009) educate that continuity of care is a concept that constitutes elements of care that are associated with various levels of connectedness with the patient, while offering care services on an individual basis (53). Purtell & Dowling (2007) document that challenges faced in many countries to promote mental health arise due to lack of adequate resources that comprise of few infrastructures, untrained health workers in this field, lack of a good health policy and others of which all lead to poor models of mental health care (80).

In Australia, disappointing reports from the human rights informed about the negative experiences that mental health patients often face. This is in terms of stigmatization, discrimination, and others. Mental health care programs established by the government are said to be aimed at promoting mental health and prevention of this illness which involve a range of care from rehabilitation to recovery. It is elaborated that these programs comprise of new ways of treatments and prevention (Commonwealth of Australia, 2010). According to the Australian National Standards for Mental Health Services (2010), mental health care services are based on models that are designed according to demographic, mortality, morbidity, cultural and social patterns that are able to provide a supportive and sustainable recovery process to patients. That is, to ensure that the recovery environment for the patients upholds human rights and encourages social inclusion, also the environment comprises of adequate awareness of support and participation needed to ensure successful recovery of patients and more importantly the environment has mechanisms for evaluating the models of care developed

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for mental health patients (21).

The continuity of care program in Australia is driven by experienced people and caregivers and the health sector as well. More so, advancements in the global human rights laws are mentioned to have also influenced the continuity of this program in the country. In these laws, considerations have been made in the U. N. Convention for countries to consider and protect the rights of the disabled and mentally ill patients as well as making continuous improvements in the models of care given to them. Hence, in Australia, such have championed this cause (Queensland Health, 2001). It is constructed that the National Standards for Mental Health Services are the standards which were initially introduced in the country to ensure the right health care practices are developed and well implemented to provide a quality health care in the mental health care and treatment processes (National Standards for Mental Health Services 2010: 10).

Commonwealth of Australia (2010) simplifies by writing that in Australia, continuity of care is basically a leeway to respecting and observing human rights laws. It involves a shift of the concept of care to the social dimensions of the health aspect. That is, modification of the supportive environment and rehabilitation settings are socially determined and these allow empowerment of communities to participate in the aspects of health care and human rights (28).

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