

Symposium | Imigrant, Refugee : [Symposium 63] Rethinking Mental Health Support for Refugees

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Room 3 (Large Hall A)

[Symposium 63] Rethinking Mental Health Support for Refugees

Moderator: Simon Groen (De Evenaar Center for Transcultural Psychiatry), Hans Rohlof (Mental Care Center)

[SY-63-05] Examining the situation on mental health support for refugees in Sweden

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Keywords : Migration changes and challenges for mental healthcare, Sweden, public mental health and health-promotion model

A brief overview is provided of the situation for mental health support of refugees in Sweden in light of the Swedish cultural context and recent migration changes. A public mental health framework is used for presenting this overview. Sweden has changed from being one of the most generous host countries to one of the most restrictive. Formally, all with residency permits and almost all children have the right to free healthcare. Different rights exist for different migrant classifications. Despite relatively good access to mental healthcare, refugees and other migrant groups face barriers to and challenges within mental healthcare: underuse of psychiatric services during the first decade in Sweden; adults and children are more likely, than the Swedish born population, to be admitted compulsorily for psychiatric disorder; at risk of not receiving adequate treatment following BD diagnosis due to lack of cultural competence in healthcare, economic restraints, as well as community factors, migrant children risk underdiagnosis of various mental health conditions and not receiving optimal care; migrant youth use less mental health services compared to Swedish-born peers. In addition to these consequences for refugees, there are also important consequences for mental health professionals, and for the wider Swedish society. These barriers and challenges identify areas of need for constructing a model that has an emphasis on health-promotion, competency and engagement for those providing and receiving mental healthcare. This is a model for improving access to and quality of mental health care for people on the move at a structural level of a local health care system, a model for improving access to and quality of mental healthcare. One such working model in the Stockholm Region, Transcultural Center, will be presented, focusing on cultural training for mental health and primary care professionals, and health communication in native languages for newcomers.