

Symposium | Forensic Psychiatry : [Symposium 39] Beyond Barriers: The Current State and Future Challenges of Mental Health Stigma Across Countries

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## [Symposium 39] Beyond Barriers: The Current State and Future Challenges of Mental Health Stigma Across Countries

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### [SY-39-01] Supporting the Reintegration of Juvenile Offenders with Psychiatric Disorders: Overcoming Double Stigma and Systemic Barriers

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Many youths hospitalized at our juvenile medical center face significant challenges in finding a place to return upon discharge. Families often refuse to accept them back, and local hospitals or care facilities are reluctant to take them in. As a result, it is not uncommon for youths to be discharged to institutions far from their hometowns. This difficulty stems from their dual status as both juvenile offenders and individuals with psychiatric disorders, making their care complex and stigmatized. These youths are subjected to a “double stigma”—as delinquents and as people with mental illness—which contributes to systemic avoidance of responsibility among support institutions. While concerns about risk and instability may be justified in some cases, excessive overestimation of danger often leads to rejection of necessary medical or welfare support. This perpetuates a cycle where the lack of appropriate support increases the likelihood of recidivism or behavioral problems. Despite efforts to reduce stigma—such as pre-discharge case conferences and information-sharing—our institution faces limitations in follow-up and outreach post-discharge. Consequently, local providers may perceive that the burden has been unfairly shifted to them, reinforcing mistrust and stigma toward youth from correctional settings. This study examined the post-discharge placements of hospitalized juveniles and analyzed the characteristics and psychosocial factors of those who faced particular difficulty in finding placements. We also reviewed current practices in discharge planning and support, and discussed future directions for improving community collaboration. We emphasize the importance of juvenile facility staff engaging more actively with community providers through outreach and ongoing communication, to bridge institutional gaps and reduce stigma toward these vulnerable youths.