The Mental health system in Norway

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429 municipalities

4 regional health authorities (RHAs)

19 counties
Background

- 429 municipalities
- 50% less than 5,000 inhabitants
- Main providers of primary and welfare services
- Local self-government; a strong tradition
Mental health services, division of responsibilities

- Primary mental health services (municipalities)

- Specialised mental health services (RHAs)
Primary mental health services (municipalities)

- Health promoting and prevention (child and maternity care, school health service)
- Pregnancy and postnatal services
- Acute assistance
- Diagnosis and treatment
- Habilitation and rehabilitation
- Home treatment and care, nursing homes

Other: Activities, Culture, Leisure
Specialised mental health services for children, adolescents and adults (RHAs)

- Outpatient and ambulatory treatment
- Inpatient treatment
- Crisis treatment
- Diagnosis
- District psychiatric centres (DPC)
- Mental hospitals
- Guiding the primary services
Financing mental health services

- Financed through public block grants, local tax revenues, reimbursements (some out-of-pocket payment)

- Earmarked grants, such as employing psychologists in the municipalities

- National Insurance Scheme
National Plan for Mental Health, Background

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  ✓ services with weaknesses in all areas
  ✓ setting the goals, guidelines
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- Parliament:
  - supporting the goals
  - but there is no money!
  - a economically binding national plan
Goals and intentions

- Prevention, - when possible
- User’s perspective – user participation
- Normalisation, wellfare, quality of life
- Voluntary treatment, reducing compulsory treatment
- To master your own life – coping with daily life
National Plan for Mental Health 1999 - 2008

A proposition to the Parliament

• The goals were set

• Quantified targets, costs of each target estimated

• Economic overall target: State support to the services
  ✓ level of annual running costs €600 million increased in 2008
  ✓ investments €800 million during the period

• The content: expansion and reorganization of the services, major investments
Financing the National plan, mainly

Earmarked block grants (!)
Main areas for improvement

• Strengthening users’ position and emphasizing information

• Strengthening the municipal services

• Expanding and restructuring the specialised services for adults (Community Psychiatry, DPCs)

• Expanding services for children and adolescents

• Improving labour market services

• Stimulating education and research
National Plan for Mental Health 1999 - 2008

Several evaluations, main contents in brief

- The targets were met (by and large..)

- The quantitative approach a success, but to little attention upon the qualitative aspects, the contents
Mental health policies in Norway

• Improvement and expansion of the mental health services is given priority

• Through the National Plan for Mental Health, additional resources are allocated to the mental health services on all levels

• Users’ needs and users’ participation is emphasized

• Services shall promote independence, improved living conditions and the ability to cope with daily life

• Focusing on voluntary treatment

• Decentralisation - the municipalities shall provide the primary services
What does the user want?

- A place to live
- Something to do
- People to be together with
- Something to live from
- Good health – reducing symptoms (treatment and care, diagnosis/assessment of level of functioning)

In the local community!
Important for children and adolescents

• National plan: Earmarking within the earmarking...

• Recruiting psychologists to the municipalities

• New strategy for childrens and adolescents mental health

• Improving the health services in schools
The Cooperation reform

- Collaboration between different levels a back bone
- Financial mechanisms
- Formal cooperation agreements between the levels
- Individual plan as a tool
Public health, - focus upon

- Promoting healthy community for children and adolescents and reducing risk factors for mental and behavioural disorders

- Research on mental problems, the development of effective treatment and the monitoring and evaluation of mental health systems

- Preventing violence and reduce the risk for posttraumatic stress disorder and reactions after traumatic experiences by early intervention and appropriate treatment techniques.
Mental Health and Work

• National Strategic Plan for Work and Mental Health (2007-2012) – enforces the national Program for Mental Health

• «See you tomorrow!»

• Campaigns to rise knowledge and openness

• Cooperation between the Directorate of Health and the Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV)
Knowledge based services
- what kind of knowledge?

- Evidence based knowledge
- Experience based knowledge
- User’ knowledge
Cultures and attitudes in the services

- Empowerment, participation
- Resources, not only illness
- Recognition of other professionals
The role of the professionals

Expert or fellow wanderer?
Challenges identified by the Nordic expert group

- Child and adolescent mental health
- Working life and mental health
- Mental health of older people
- The primary care sector
- User and carer influence
- Voluntariness and coercion
Harmony or conflict, - or?
Thank you for your attention!

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