

The Shifting Locus of Mental Health Care A Comparison between France and England

Workshop

17 June 2011 - Sainte-Anne Hospital - Paris

Call for Contributions

The objective of the workshop is to bring together researchers from different social sciences disciplines who are currently working on the social consequences of the use of mental health services in France and England. Many academic works have contributed to a better understanding of the dehospitalisation policy in France and England, often focusing on the challenges consequently faced by professionals and mental health institutions. Only a few have built their research around new care practices and policies of social inclusion. In France, recent articles and books have described the day-to-day care provided to people suffering from mental disorders but their aim was not to question in a systematic way the new relations between health and social care, between professionals, carers and users. The workshop intends to provide a forum to discuss recent developments in psychiatric and social care.

The social organisation of psychiatric care has gone through considerable change in the past fifty years in most countries with asylum facilities. France and England are no exception. Among the numerous reasons behind this change, some lie in the criticisms made by social sciences regarding the treatment and patients' social positions, often permanent residents in large psychiatric institutions at the time. Dehospitalisation policies have shifted the place in society of people suffering from mental disorders. These are no longer as isolated from society. Psychiatric disorders and their social consequences have since been regulated not only by psychiatrists and nurses, but also by others providers of health and social care. Nevertheless, the place in society of those suffering from mental disorders still remains very problematic.

The spread of new care facilities has considerably changed the everyday life of people with mental health problems. Semi-institutional facilities or « micro-institutions » are intended to provide care but often only reinforce stigma and discrimination. *How can we understand this new relation between psychiatric and social policies ? What does it mean for health and social care professionals and for users and carers (in terms of independence, choice and autonomy) ?*

The workshop intends to trace the rationales for dehospitalisation in two national cases. France and England are examples of Western countries where psychiatric care has gone through considerable change since the Second World War. In both countries, the political challenges have not only been to adopt competitive ideological views and scientific improvements, but to build a social policy for this heterogeneous group in a

period when a different vocabulary of health and disability has become the common language, often without further definition. Three types of approaches will be encouraged:

- *A comparative approach* – The different role of the State in France and England and the circulation of ideas and concepts between the two countries, make a comparative approach to mental health policies particularly relevant (for instance a comparison of the notions of « sectorisation » and « community care » and of their implementation) ;
- *A socio-historical approach* – The context of dehospitalisation policies in France and England has been studied, but the slow process of their implementation is less known. It would be interesting to focus on the practical implementation of these policies, especially in relation with other social policies (housing, social exclusion), with users and carers' views and experiences and with the rise of the safety and risk issues.
- *An ethnographic approach* – Extensive fieldwork is needed to understand the social position of people suffering from mental health problems and the way they can make use their route through health and social care systems in both countries.

In order to diversify the perspectives, discussions between researchers and practitioners will be encouraged in each session of the workshop.

Please submit an abstract of up to 2000 characters by **15 March 2011** by email to: e.courtin@lse.ac.uk and benoit.eyraud@ish-lyon.cnrs.fr. Please include in your submission: name and institution/organisation at which you are based and contact details, description of the objective of the paper, the methodology and the literature. Papers can be written either in French or in English. Details regarding transportation and accommodation will be circulated in mid-April with the programme of the workshop. We intend to publish the papers presented at the workshop. Please contact the organizers of the workshop should you require further information.

Important dates

15 March 2011: final date for submission of abstracts

30 March 2011: intended date for feedback on submissions

15 April 2011: intended date for circulation of the programme of the workshop

Organisation

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