

## AN EXAMPLE OF ENVIRONMENT-FRIENDLY PSYCHIATRY: THE PROJECT FOR CONVERTING A RURAL BUILDING INTO A PSYCHIATRIC REHABILITATION COMMUNITY

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**Introduction:** A challenging medicine dissertation: to design a psychiatric therapeutic community.

**Objectives:** A medical student winning a grant addressed to architects and farm laborers aimed to convert a rural area through Social Innovation programmes, a group of young enthusiastic psychiatrists and a donor involved in psychiatric circumstances are the actors of the project for turning a rural building located in the small village of “Villa San Bartolomeo” (Reggio Emilia, Italy) into a psychiatric social-rehabilitation community.

**Methods:** The project started reviewing the literature concerning community-based psychiatry residential facilities. Later, a structured interview has been carried out with the village's inhabitants in order to investigate both their perception of stigma towards mental illness and the perceived needs of their city. The answers have then been used to organize the activities within the psychiatric community, ranging from recreational through sportive until occupational ones, such as farming vegetable gardens, breeding domestic animals, producing handiworks. These labors are intended both to satisfy the village demands and realize a greater integration of the community itself within the surrounding social network.

**Results:** The therapeutic interventions that are going to be realized within the residential home will be aimed to promote patients' personal growth and adapting capacity. These interventions are intended to allow the accomplishment of a greater housing independence of the hosts by restructuring their affective, relational and social backgrounds.

**Conclusions:** This is an ambitious project, started by chance, representing the desire and the hope for curing mental illness by establishing a contact with the natural environment.