Should social psychiatry be a priority in mental health research?

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Introduction: Further to the recent debate about the future and the identity of psychiatry, we argue that social psychiatry will play a major role in psychiatric research and practice in the future.

Aims: To report priority areas in mental health research according to different categories of European stakeholders and to analyze pitfalls in training in social psychiatry.

Objectives: To review the current state of knowledge on social psychiatry and to propose future actions for research and practice in mental health.

Methods: In this presentation we will report data from the ROAMER stakeholders' survey on priorities for mental health research in Europe according to the national associations of psychiatrists, other mental health professionals, users and/or carers, trainees in psychiatry, and the results from the activities of the European Psychiatric Association – Early Career Psychiatrists Committee (EPA-ECPC).

Results: Social psychiatry is a priority in mental health research according to all categories of stakeholders. In particular, the most important research areas indicated by the 108 respondents are early detection and management of mental disorders, quality of mental health services, prevention of mental disorders, rehabilitation and social inclusion, and stigma and discrimination. According to the survey carried out by EPA-ECPC, social psychiatry, psychopathology and forensic psychiatry are the areas most neglected during training Conclusions: Our results show the general tendency that social psychiatry is a priority in mental health research and training. Actions should be taken as soon as possible in order to: a) fight stigma; b) improve employment rates of mentally ill; c) develop strategies to manage migrants' psychiatric problems; d) improve quality of mental health services; e) promote mental health in the population.