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## IMPLEMENTING A NATIONAL CASE-MANAGEMENT TRAINING PROGRAM IN PORTUGAL

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**Introduction:** In Portugal, a new National Mental Health Plan has been launched with the following objectives: equal access to care, decentralisation of mental health services and integration of mental health services in the general health services. In order to change the operational model for mental health teams, a case-management training program has been launched by the Ministry of Health.

**Objectives:** This study aims to evaluate:

- a) the feasibility of implementing the program on a national level,
- b) the quality of the training program and
- c) the satisfaction of the trainees.

**Methods:** The study was carried out at 36 public mental health services in mainland Portugal. The professionals attended a case management course (SAMHSA procedures), in which they were trained by means of guidelines, demonstrative audios, scenarios and role-playing. The assessment was conducted with a questionnaire addressing logistics, program content, acquisition of skills, usefulness and overall satisfaction.

**Results:** 135 professionals from the whole country have been involved. The trainees' acquisition of competences was found rather satisfactory. Results of the training were impressive regarding satisfaction and motivation of the trainees (69% were highly satisfied).

Dimensions such as organization (35% highly satisfied, 52% satisfied), program content (41% highly satisfied, 43% satisfied), practical skills gaining (35% highly satisfied, 58% satisfied) and usefulness (58% highly satisfied, 31% satisfied) were also very well rated.

**Conclusions:** Of utmost relevance, it was possible to implement a case management training program at a national level, with no particular difficulties. The impact of courses on trainees was overall impressive.