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24th European Congress of Psychiatry

Early career psychiatrists programme

Conversations – the political and social mission of psychiatry

EECP 01

The political and social mission of psychiatry

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Psychiatry is based on values and scientific evidence. The presentation will argue that both bases come with a social and political mission.

The values require a commitment to help those in need of support, which cannot be fully achieved without social and political action. The scientific evidence points to the central role of societal factors, such as inequality and poverty, for the development of mental disorders. Influencing these factors requires political decisions.

It will be concluded that taking up the social and political mission is a moral imperative for both psychiatrists as a professional group and individual psychiatrists, and may make the profession more relevant in society, more attractive to medical students, and more effective in helping patients with mental distress.

The discussion will address the challenges and practical options for such a mission.

Disclosure of interest The author has not supplied his declaration of competing interest.

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EFPT/ECPC-EPA Symposium – Identity or competency: how to train the modern day psychiatrist

EECP 02

The tension between identity and competency: Comparing behavioural and constructionist approaches to professional formation

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Contemporary approaches to medical education emphasize the importance of doctors in training demonstrating the acquisition of competencies. This approach to educating doctors has been criticized on a number of grounds, not least because a solely behavioural focus risks trivializing medical professionalism. An alternative approach is to look at the formation of professional identity as a legitimate goal of training.

In this presentation, I will describe the behavioural and constructionist approaches to medical education and their implications for psychiatry training. I will make a plea for psychiatry training to renegotiate the balance between the two approaches.

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EECP 03

Should all psychiatrists be skilled to practice psychotherapy?

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Psychiatrists have a unique place in the spectrum of mental health services, as being able to integrate psychotherapy and pharmacotherapy in clinical practice. It is through psychotherapy training that a trainee gains optimal communicative skills and competence in establishing therapeutic alliance with a patient. It helps developing empathic understanding, which is very important for a good collaboration and enable understanding, diagnostic and treatment. It improves trainees' own insight. All are these fundamental aspects of a biopsychosocial approach of psychiatry.

In many countries psychiatry trainees have a positive attitude towards psychotherapy during their training. Moreover, patients often prefer and adhere to combined psychotherapy and medication than split-care treatments. Research in psychotherapy provides ample evidence that these treatments are effective. The UEMS considers psychotherapy education as mandatory. EFPT advocates that all trainees must gain competence in at least one recognized form of psychotherapy and have a basic knowledge for other forms. Altogether, there is a consensus among all actors of mental health services that psychotherapy training is essential and should be improved. Yet, it is still far from being a priority in psychiatric training and is subdued by biological training and