

Oral presentation

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Independent complaint-management in psychiatry

Gudrun Uebele*¹ and Johannes Hamann²

Address: ¹Deutsche Gesellschaft für Soziale Psychiatrie, Zeltinger Str. 9, 50969 Köln, Germany and ²Klinik und Poliklinik für Psychiatrie und Psychotherapie der TU München, Möhlstr. 26, 81675 München, Germany

* Corresponding author

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When it comes to conflicts with psychiatric facilities, people with a mental disability are usually disadvantaged to the mentally healthy ones. This applies all the more to legal restrictive measures. Often clients depend upon the personnel's goodwill. This results in avoiding problems by not complaining and furthermore in discontent. Excessive demand in conflicts, caused by the illness, a lack of legal knowledge and a negative level of expectations prevent the psychiatry-experienced from taking the initiative once they feel mistreated. Independent support leads to increased self-esteem for the respective persons. Since the beginning of the 1990s in Germany there are initiatives which offer support for complaints which are filed from trialogically occupied independent complaint-offices. Collectively, psychiatry-experienced, relatives and employees of psychiatric institutions advise on how to deal with complaints and accompany the complainant to a satisfying solution. Both acceptance and availability of independent complaint-offices are distinctively greater than that of insitutionalized complaint-facilities, since here the complainants expect more independence. This mutual consulting prevents the case brought up from being viewed one-sided. In most cases psychiatric institutions value the independent complaint-offices, which work on an honorary basis, as mediators. In some federal states complaint-offices are already layed down in the relevant mental health laws.