

Oral presentation

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Complaint-management in psychiatry – a nationwide survey in Germany

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Background

To describe and characterize the work of independent complaint offices for users of psychiatric services and of ombudsmen in psychiatric hospitals.

Methods

Nationwide survey addressed to all independent complaint offices and to all psychiatric hospitals in Germany.

Results

The authors were able to identify N = 39 independent complaint offices. About 50% of the hospitals surveyed (N = 423) reported having a patient's advocate ("Patientenfürsprecher"). Both types of intercession agency rely mainly on volunteer service. While complaint offices are regularly staffed by psychiatry-experienced, their relatives and professionals, patient's advocates are often retired employees of the respective hospitals. Both types of such agencies deal with a variety of complaints.

Conclusion

Implications of the results will be discussed with regard to differences and similarities of the different institutions.