# Evidence based Psychiatric Care Journal of the Italian Society of Psychiatry

#### **Editorial**

# 49° Congresso Nazionale della SIP. Genova 12-15 ottobre 2022: finally the SIP's National Congress in presence

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We are really looking forward to meeting next October in Genoa for the 49th National Congress, postponed by two years due to the Covid 19 pandemic. The Congress was initially scheduled from 1 to 4 October 2020, postponed a first time to autumn 2021, a second time to May 2022, and finally organized to the current date 12-15 October 2022. These forced postponements effectively extended the term of office of the current executive of the Italian Psychiatric Association (SIP) by one year. This election postponement has led to some tensions within the executive and uncertainty as to the composition of the next one. With goodwill and a spirit of cooperation, agreement was reached on a single list of candidates, leaving the choice of the next hospital president to the members' meeting.

Whoever of the two candidates is elected will have the support of the other elected members in the unitary list that was built through a mediation of the wishes of the territorial component. The national congresses have always been an interesting time for scientific discussion and the society's strategy, and the elective congress has also been a time for renewal and an increase in new members. During these 4 years of pan-demia, the scientific society has wanted to be present with numerous initiatives to support all mental health operators. I recall the distribution of IPDs in 2020 supported by Otzuka pharmaceuticals and the realisation of specialist telephone support for operators in agreement with TIM, the publication of behaviour guidelines during the various phases of the pandemic in cooperation with the Istituto Superiore di Sanità, participation in the World Psychiatric Association's emergency group, support for patients in Ukraine through the Polish Society of Psychiatry, all scientific initiatives and participation at ministerial tables carried out online, and lastly, the preparation of the programme for the National Congress.

We therefore trust that you will come to Genoa in large numbers and that there will be a massive participation of members at the elective assembly on 14 October 2022. Genoa intends to welcome the National Congress with an inauguration that will also include the participation of local celebrities from the world of entertainment in support of a discipline that is always underfunded with respect to both the importance of the pathologies it treats and the number of people affected by them. The opportunity of the NRRP must be appropriately seized in strengthening territorial and outreach services for citizens with the broad involvement of mental health. The number of plenary and symposium speakers is certainly very significant, and we therefore count on the broad participation of members, who have shown a marked interest in the society over the past year, both through the constant renewal of membership fees and the increase in new members, particularly among trainees and new specialists. The serious crisis in the number of specialists in Medicine has also been felt markedly in our discipline. If this trend is confirmed in the coming years, we can expect to have mental health departments with a more adequate number of psychiatrists for their proper functioning by 2026.





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This will allow those who are working under difficult conditions and prevalently on urgency to design care pathways with less pressure. Psychiatry brings about recovery when it succeeds in gaining the consent and co-operation of even the most serious patients. In order to achieve these results, it requires staff who devote time to all aspects of the relationship with the patient and their relatives, and this is achieved if resources, ideas and attractiveness are available. The latter is proper to the discipline that has as its object of study the mind and its functioning, biologically, relationally and socially, which encompasses the essence of the individual and his existence in the world.

Treating mental disorders does not mean treating behaviour that is the result of a number of components on which mental illness can have a more or less important influence. We emphasise this aspect because there is a belief in public opinion that certain behaviours, especially violent or criminal ones, are determined by mental illness and that the perpetrator should be treated rather than serve a sentence. In these situations, it is important to delve into the clinical level and consider the secondary benefits that ac-

crue to the subject if he or she is found to be mentally ill. Every day, those citizens are reported by the police to the Italian Mental Health Centres who, in contact with police officers, have raised doubts about their mental balance. Reporting is appropriate in all those cases where it does not replace other appropriate measures. I am referring to clear violations of the law that are not immediately prosecuted on suspicion of mental illness by the police accompanying to the emergency room a person who has had a mental breakdown for trivial reasons. In these cases, it is imperative that the police protect the health workers by waiting for the outcome of the specialist assessment before not allowing the subject to continue the regular judicial process. The recent abolition of the Judicial Psvchiatric Hospitals has shifted the burden of patients with mental disorders to the departments and regions, which far outnumber the residential places in the REMS. In fact, two-thirds of the healthcare response is provided on an outpatient or residential basis by the operators of the Departments of Mental Health, who were already experiencing difficulties in finding specialist doctors.



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