

## ABSTRACT

### **Outpatient services in Croatia**

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Croatia is a country in transition. This process of development of civil society is affecting all aspects of societal functioning, health care services included. Although changes are developing slowly, changes are occurring due to the growing sense of individualism. Citizens are more aware of their rights and obligations. Health care services are in a double-sided developmental process. On one hand the centralistic way of planning and managing of services is being replaced by more local initiatives, and on the other hand citizens are becoming more aware of their needs and rights. So to say: 'patients' are changing into customers or clients, who want to be served in a way that is according to their needs, wishes and (financial) means. In services for people with disabilities the same kind of development is becoming more realistic. De-centralization is increasing.

According to development in Western European countries, a development has been coming up in which the focus of health services has shifted from the service provider (doctor, hospital, institution) to the person to be served: the patient/customer/client. Besides the focus of the service providing organizations has shifted: from 'good clinical practice' to delivery of services according to the quality that is being demanded by the customer. The definition of the 'patient' is changing too, into the patient (client) being a part of his system. The system as such becomes much more the focus, instead of the single individual client. In this line of development the existence of outpatient facilities is an understandable and logical answer to the changing needs of 'patients'.

In this paper we want present an example of an outpatient service, established in Zagreb, Croatia. “Centar Val” is the result of a cooperation project of Croatian and Dutch psychologists. The centre offers a variety of individual based services in the field of disability and mental health.

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