

Oral presentation

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Impact of coercive treatments on biographical narratives

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from WPA Thematic Conference. Coercive Treatment in Psychiatry: A Comprehensive Review
Dresden, Germany. 6–8 June 2007

Published: 19 December 2007

BMC Psychiatry 2007, 7(Suppl 1):S58 doi:10.1186/1471-244X-7-S1-S58

This abstract is available from: <http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-244X/7/S1/S58>

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Background

Involuntary treatment is an integral and controversial part of psychiatric practice worldwide. Many concerns have been raised regarding the personal and legal impact of involuntary interventions in the course of psychiatric treatment [1]. Objective: To explore what it means for people to have experienced involuntary treatment with regard to their biography – their life story as well as their possible illness story or most likely both.

Methods

A qualitative study has been conducted involving focus groups and interviews of service users with a history of involuntary commitment. Transcripts were coded and analyzed for thematic content by means of inductive formation of categories from the texts, aiming at establishing a typology of coercion experiences, reactions and styles of integration in personal stories from the spoken words of the participants.

Results

Involuntary hospitalization is often seen as a traumatizing and stigmatizing life-event and it is hard to speak about it. Some people choose an active way to deal with such an experience, while others prefer to not think about it. Consequences of involuntary treatment intertwine with consequences of suffering a psychotic episode.

Conclusion

Involuntary hospitalization has a complex impact on persons' life.

References

1. Lefley HP: **Involuntary treatment: concerns of consumers, families, and society.** *Innov Res* 1993, 2:7-9.