

EPA GAINING EXPERIENCE PROGRAMME REPORT

**On the observership visit at the “Psychiatric Department, Zamora Hospital (Zamora, Spain)”
Realised from the 11th to the 25th June 2017**

By Yuriy Osadshiy

REPORT:

Despite my worries about adapting in foreign country, the observership went great. The chair of my observership was Professor M. Franco, who managed to organize all the work that way I felt very welcomed and comfortable. All staff members were very kind and helpful and I could ask for help or advice at any time. I am impressed with high quality team work – communication among team members and well-coordinated work.

As I said, my supervisor was professor Manuel Franco. At the beginning I had some difficulties to contact him due to some preparation questions before coming to Spain, but after some time I got all the answers and this model of communication had no negative influence on my stay in Spain. Moreover, he was able to devote me enough time for showing and explaining how works 2 different models of the mental health service (one of them is in Zamora and second one is in Valladolid). I learned a lot from him and mental health care organization in Spain.

At first I was expected to gain a lot of knowledge about use of information technologies in mental health service, because I did some background reading and one of my field of interest is adapt technology use in psychiatry at some regions of Russia. For example how using Internet technologies can be implemented diagnostics of psychiatric illness, treatment management and prevention of mental illness. But I changed my aims during my visit- I was so positively impressed with mental care system, especially from organizational point of view, that I fully concentrated to gain as more as possible knowledge about multidisciplinary team work in psychiatric care patients.

It was great opportunity to learn a lot about therapeutical relationships between mental health specialists and their patients. The supporting, horizontal and respectful relationships has key role of successful treatment in this mental care model. Finding out there is model that functions in a style where patients with psychotic disorders do not have to be controlled, do not have to be kept for long treatment in mental hospitals, specialist and patients are able to develop trustful relationships- it all influenced me deeply about how much work we have to do to change traditional attitude from psychiatrists in my country. I have to think about reduction in level of stigma against psychiatric patients- not only in society, but also in medical system workers. During my observership in Spain I gain practical experience and saw how in reality is working model when patients can live in the apartments instead of psychiatric wards or institutions, they can cook on their own instead of catering service, are able to fulfill their daily activities, and with responsibility visit a doctor and rehabilitation programs regularly without strict control. That is important that this model is cheaper for the government.

I was able to spend time with different professionals (psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, PhD students, nurses) that allowed me to get a clear understanding about every specialist role working in model. I observed and experienced how this kind of mental care model in reality work for patients and how satisfied patients are with treatment, and of course if there is satisfaction with treatment from patients, it reduces drop out levels, and increases life quality of

patients. The small population size allows you not only for specialists, but also for society to be in contact with patients in everyday life basis more importantly- decreases the stigmatization level about psychiatric illnesses. It is very supporting for patients that the model includes a lot of joint events with the patients and the specialists, for instance, weekly football matches, excursions etc. All over this observership inspired me to invent some of the model structures in my hometown and this experience encouraged me to enrich my foreign practice in other countries, in order to work more professional in my clinical work.

I am very grateful to the EPA and early Career Psychiatrists Committee for the opportunity to have the observership and to professor M. Franco and his team (Juan-Luis Muñoz-Sánchez, Estherr and other) for the organizing the observership in Zamora on such high level.