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Designing an Inclusive Model of Clinical Intervention among Persons Diagnosed with Borderline Personality Disorder: A Research Project Protocol

Introduction

There is evidence that Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) is associated with stereotypes, prejudices and stigmatization even among mental health professionals. Negative attitudes and behaviors from the part of the medical and nursing personnel towards people living with BPD (PLBPD) could be counter-therapeutic.

Objectives

To develop an inclusive and comprehensive model of therapeutic communication and effective management of the relationship between the mental health professionals and PLBPD, taking into account the views and the experiences of both actors in terms of facilitating factors and barriers. The purpose is to inform the content of interventions in order to support change in clinical and societal level.

Methods

The program consists of research, educational and communication activities. A mixed methods research approach will be implemented, including: a) interviews with psychiatrists and psychologists, b) focus groups with psychiatric nurses, c) interviews with PLBPD, d) participant observation in psychiatric wards, e) cross-sectional research with students in mental health professions, and f) on-line survey for PLBPD. The outcome will lead to a model of therapeutic communication and professional training sessions. Further communication activities are expected to contribute to social visibility and stigma tackling.

Conclusion

We believe that the specific project presents a number of social innovations according to the EU standards. Specifically: a) at an epistemological level seeks to connect different theories, b) at a methodological level uses mixed methods research, c) adopts an empowering approach, d) promotes new collaborations between institutions and groups, e) seeks to create social change through public awareness and knowledge.