
Comparative Cost Analysis: Community-based services as an alternative to institutions



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REFERENCE GROUP Inclusion Europe - Mental Health Europe - Open Society Mental Health Initiative -
European Disability Forum - Autism Europe

BACKGROUND As part of their on-going strategy to investigate alternatives to institutions, the European Commission has funded this project to examine the economic and financial aspects of deinstitutionalisation, in order to make the case for alternative community-based settings. These community-based settings would be designed to promote independent living to the maximum extent possible, through the provision of high quality, affordable and accessible social care and health services for people with disabilities. Previous work ("Included in Society"), explored the number of people in institutional care in 22 European and accession countries and the situation for people in four of these countries in depth. The present study is an extension of the earlier work and makes use of networks of professionals and academics throughout Europe (such as the Intellectual Disability Research Network, Mental Health Economics European Network)

AIM The overall aim of the project is to provide scientific evidence to inform and stimulate policy development in the reallocation of financial resources to best meet the needs of people with disabilities, through a transition from large institutions to a system of community-based services and independent living.

METHODS The project will include three main phases to be conducted over a period of 22 months from January 2006.

Phase 1

This phase will involve all partner organisations and will collect, analyse and interpret existing statistical and other quantitative data on the number of people with disabilities in residential services (where at least 80% of residents are disabled) in the 28 European countries indicated below. Partners will consult official sources of data in each country and will use a template, designed in consultation with all partners and reference group members, to list all types of services available, the characteristics of each service type and then the number of places in each service type by disability, age,

gender, number and training of staff. Central to this phase will be the analysis of the completeness of the data available and the definitions and assumptions which underlie the data from each country.

Partner

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Countries for whom responsible

UK, Ireland, Denmark, Malta, Sweden and Finland
Austria, Germany, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia,
Slovakia and Slovenia
Spain, Portugal, Italy, Greece, Turkey and Cyprus
Czech Republic, Romania, Poland, Hungary and
Bulgaria
Belgium, France, Netherlands, Luxembourg

Phase 2

This phase of the project will analyse the economic, financial and organisational arrangements necessary for an optimal transition from a system of large institutions to one based on community services and independent living, using three countries (England, Germany and Italy) as case studies to illustrate the issues involved. This phase will include:

- Specification of the roles of national, regional and local public authorities, disabled people, their families, their representatives, staff organisations and non-governmental organisations
- Consideration both of the comparative costs of institutional versus community-based services and of the transitional costs involved while replacing institutions with alternatives
- Clarification of the costs falling on public and other bodies and also of the costs to private individuals (e.g. disabled people and their families) in so far as this is relevant, including differential effects on men and women.

Phase 3

This phase will involve the preparation of the report including the data from Phases 1 and 2. In addition to reporting the findings from each phase of the project, the report will specifically address:

- The adequacy of the data available in each country, including its completeness, consistency and comparability
- Recommendations for the cost-effective transition from institutions to community-based services, identifying different strategies for different groups of disabled

Enquiries about this project can be made to:

FURTHER

INFORMATION

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The TIZARD CENTRE is one of the leading UK academic groups working in intellectual disability and community care. The Centre has an extensive programme of consultancy and research and provides short courses, degree and diploma programmes at the University of Kent and elsewhere.

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