

## Cyprus

### General Information

Cyprus is a country with an approximate area of 9 thousand sq. km. (UNO, 2001). Its population is 0.807 million, and the sex ratio (men per hundred women) is 100 (UNO, 2004). The proportion of population under the age of 15 years is 21% (UNO, 2004), and the proportion of population above the age of 60 years is 16% (WHO, 2004). The literacy rate is 98.6% for men and 95.1% for women (UNESCO/MoH, 2004).

The country is a high income group country (based on World Bank 2004 criteria). The proportion of health budget to GDP is 8.1%. The per capita total expenditure on health is 941 international \$, and the per capita government expenditure on health is 449 international \$ (WHO, 2004).

The main language(s) used in the country is (are) Greek, Turkish and English. The largest ethnic group(s) is (are) Greek, and the other ethnic group(s) are (is) Turkish. The largest religious group(s) is (are) Greek Orthodox Christian (four-fifths), and the other religious group(s) are (is) Sunni Muslim.

The life expectancy at birth is 75.5 years for males and 79.1 years for females (WHO, 2004). The healthy life expectancy at birth is 67 years for males and 68 years for females (WHO, 2004).

### Epidemiology

There is substantial epidemiological data on mental illnesses in Cyprus in internationally accessible literature. No attempt was made to include this information here.

### Mental Health Resources

#### Mental Health Policy

A mental health policy is present. The policy was initially formulated in 1985.

The components of the policy are advocacy, promotion, prevention, treatment and rehabilitation. The mental health policy is concerned with updating legislation according to European standards, integrating mental health with community care and improving the living conditions of patients in the mental hospital in Nicosia.

#### Substance Abuse Policy

A substance abuse policy is present. The policy was initially formulated in 1978.

#### National Mental Health Programme

A national mental health programme is present. The programme was formulated in 1995.

## **National Therapeutic Drug Policy/Essential List of Drugs**

A national therapeutic drug policy/essential list of drugs is present. It was formulated in 1995.

## **Mental Health Legislation**

Cyprus has a Mental Health Act. The new law covers treatment, admission and care of the mentally ill. Human rights issues are also covered. Under this law, the mental hospital can admit voluntary patients, too. A new legislation envisaging a national anti-drug committee is under discussion in the parliament.

The latest legislation was enacted in 1997.

## **Mental Health Financing**

There are budget allocations for mental health.

The country spends 7% of the total health budget on mental health.

The primary sources of mental health financing in descending order are tax based, out of pocket expenditure by the patient or family, social insurance and grants.

The country has disability benefits for persons with mental disorders.

## **Mental Health Facilities**

Mental health is a part of primary health care system. Actual treatment of severe mental disorders is available at the primary level. There is an ongoing cooperation of the community psychiatrists with general practitioners, and there are regular workshops with the participation of WHO experts.

Regular training of primary care professionals is carried out in the field of mental health. In the last two years, about 60 personnel were provided training. Mental health services offer a three month training course for doctors trained as general practitioners.

There are community care facilities for patients with mental disorders. Community psychiatric nurses are present in all regions. In addition to regular services, they make home visits and provide crisis intervention. Nicosia has an Information and Counselling centre for drug abusers. Day care centres are available in 3 regions. These are run in cooperation with NGOs. A group home for 4 half-way patients and 3 hostels for ex-patients are available.

## **Psychiatric Beds and Professionals**

Total psychiatric beds per 10 000 population	5.2
Psychiatric beds in mental hospitals per 10 000 population	4.5
Psychiatric beds in general hospitals per 10 000 population	0.6
Psychiatric beds in other settings per 10 000 population	0
Number of psychiatrists per 100 000 population	5
Number of neurosurgeons per 100 000 population	1.3
Number of psychiatric nurses per 100 000 population	45
Number of neurologists per 100 000 population	2.6
Number of psychologists per 100 000 population	19.3
Number of social workers per 100 000 population	25

Besides the mental hospital at Nicosia there are other psychiatric units and specialized units like the child psychiatry centres, detoxification centres, psychiatric units for geriatrics, mentally retarded, community centres, etc. Ongoing training has increased. Personnel are being trained locally and abroad in psychotherapy and other interventions. Workshops on research methodology are held.

## **Non-Governmental Organizations**

NGOs are involved with mental health in the country. They are mainly involved in promotion, prevention and rehabilitation.

## **Information Gathering System**

There is mental health reporting system in the country.

The country has no data collection system or epidemiological study on mental health. WHO support is being sought to develop a system.

## **Programmes for Special Population**

The country has specific programmes for mental health for minorities, refugees, disaster affected population, elderly and children.

## **Therapeutic Drugs**

The following therapeutic drugs are generally available at the primary health care level of the country: carbamazepine, phenobarbital, phenytoin sodium, sodium valproate, amitriptyline, chlorpromazine, diazepam, fluphenazine, haloperidol, lithium, biperiden, carbidopa, levodopa.

## **Other Information**

The National Five-Year Plan proposes to divide the country into five administrative sectors with each having their own mental health centre with most facilities for rehabilitation. Non-governmental organizations, church, other health services, local authorities and other interested bodies will help. Consultants from UNHCR have proposed that a bi-communal mental health services programme for the Greeks and Turks would help persons from both communities to share resources and professional expertise.

## **Additional Sources of Information**

- Annual Report (1999) Mental Health Services.
- Sundel, M. (1996) Designing mental health services to improve ethnic relations. *World Future*, 47, 15-23.