

HOW TO INFLUENCE POLITICIANS

PAUL ARTEEL,
GAMIAN SEMINAR, BUCHAREST, 24 MAY 2009

How to influence society?

politicians

partners in health policy (insurance companies)

public opinion

media

industry & trade unions

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Why is there a lack of influence?

Internal factors:

- lack of coherence,
- no clear message,
- no translation into structures.

External factors:

- stigma (internal en external),
- lack of information,
- wrong, bad information (Millennium trilogy Stieg Larson)

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Transfer of knowledge about mental Health and mental diseases

comprehensible
clear message

Importance of school/youth projects!
multiplication effect

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Give evidence of the effectiveness of
treatment

pharmaceutical treatment

psychotherapy

self help

psycho education

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Work together, look for partners, make
coalitions...

emphasize on common goals,
not on differences

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Encourage, organise human contacts

Organise visits where visitors can make
contacts with patients and relatives

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Be on the air

if you're not in the media, you don't exist
media set the political agenda

send regular short messages to the media

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Work on a long term project

based on a specific scientific plan
(waiting lists, stigma, recovery,...)

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Show that your not a minority

one out of four is confronted with mental disease during lifetime (more than cancer or cardiovascular diseases...)

joining a patient organisation is not evident (stigma), outing can be dangerous!

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Bringing patients together through advocacy

advocacy has a lot of possibilities to realise
your objectives

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Advocacy

is open for anyone with a complaint/remark

good advocacy works outreaching,
goes to the patient..is visible ...can be easily
contacted.

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Advocacy

is independent
financed by
patients,
insurances and
gouvernement (taxes)

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Advocacy

works free of charge

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Advocacy

investigates on the respect of law and regulations,
but also considers equity and honesty of comportment

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Advocacy

respects confidentiality

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Advocacy

doesn't discriminate

(there are no illness-related complaints)

hears all partners involved

and makes an objective judgement

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Advocacy

formulates structural remarks on the mental
health policy and structures
publishes a yearly report

high moral authority -> **influences society**