

## FROM THE EDITORS

Dear Readers,

the beginning of the year brought out the indignation and protest of the psychiatrist community. This is due to the scandalous article by Piotr Nowak, published in early January in addition to Rzeczpospolita “Plus minus”. According to the author – professor of philosophy at the University of Białystok – “mentally unstable” people should not be admitted to universities. He explicitly advocates for discrimination, he calls mentally ill people madmen, writes that “mental illness creates distances, and, in healthy people, triggers the feeling referred to by the psychologists as “observer discomfort””. It could be considered a load of rubbish and only sympathy with Mr. Nowak that he makes such a statement; in a free country everyone has the right to preach any possible absurdity. Only that this particular absurdity is exceptionally harmful to the society – it strikes people struggling with crises and mental illnesses, fits in the trend of exclusion and stigmatization of our patients. We – psychiatrists know the efforts – sometimes heroic and most respectful – our patients make to live normally, to study, take up work. We encourage them to do so, we fight together for their decent, meaningful life and functioning in the family and society. We can list the examples of artists, scientists, doctors, lawyers, businessmen or clergymen who have struggled with a psychological crisis at some point in their lives. We can recall the great names of people whose lives were marked by suffering from mental illness, without whom our world would be poorer for great artistic or scientific achievements. However, our consciousness does not change the painful fact that the image of “dangerous insanity” still persists in the society. That is why it is our duty not only to treat patients but also to work on the image of mental illness, psychiatry and psychiatrists. Currently, it is one of the priorities of the Polish Psychiatric Association. We hope that in *Psychiatria Polska* we will be able to publish more and more of your research and review papers devoted to this subject.

The papers published in the current issue are devoted to attitudes of Polish psychiatrists toward the mentally ill and the influence of early psychosocial intervention on the outcomes of people suffering from schizophrenia. It is also worth to return and refer to previously published articles on the impact of rehabilitation on the social functioning of patients with schizophrenia [1], on the role of work activity in the process of recovery [2] or on how stigma is on the way to recovery [3].

The condition necessary to achieve functional remission and to make patients able to participate in social life is modern treatment. In this issue, Marek Jarema et al. focus on paliperidone palmitate in the treatment of schizophrenia. At this point, we encourage you to recall the text on the use of second-generation long-acting antipsychotics [4]. Modern

treatment is, of course, not only pharmacotherapy, but also providing patients with the support system. The paper by Paweł Bronowski et al. on Occupational Therapy Workshops and Community-based Support Centers refers to this subject. However, patients often face barriers to access to medical care. This problem in the case of alcohol addicts is described by Łukasz Wieczorek.

The exclusion affects not only mentally ill people. Heterosexual people are still struggling with it. Minority stress and the resulting mental or psychological problems are sometimes the reasons for seeking psychiatrist or psychotherapist help. In addition, a homosexual person is no different from a heterosexual one – he or she also has various illnesses, including mental illness, neurosis, sexual dysfunction, substance abuse problems, etc. The psychiatrist should be aware of this and pay attention to the specificity of the issues. We encourage you to read the two texts by Bartosz Grabski and Krzysztof Kasperek, devoted to sexual dysfunctions in non-heterosexual men. At this point it is worth mentioning the paper devoted to psychotherapy in this group of people [5] and indirect self-destruction [6].

We wish you an interesting reading!

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