

Translation by Patrizia Rustichelli-Stirgwolt

The review of the Italian association of psycho-neuro-endocrine-immunology

Edited by Francesco Bottaccioli

PNEI NEWS

The new knowledge of science and health

IT IS TIME FOR PSYCHOTHERAPY



Pnei News – bimonthly review – nr 1 – year XII– January – February 2018

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EDITORIAL

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David Lazzari

PSYCHOTHERAPY

Page 4. An alternative to the outdated and anti-scientific psychiatric treatments.

In England they implemented a program of easy access to psychotherapies. The publicly funded IATP (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies) was based on the evidences that the increase of psychological treatments improves the health of the citizens and reduces the State expenses.

Paolo Migone

Page 7. Well-being and psychotherapy in times of crisis.

This article is based on a Master Diploma Thesis in “PNEI and Science of Integrative Care” discussed by the author in January 2018 at the University of L’Aquila.

Ines Cultrona

INTERVIEW

Page 10. New therapies are being tested for the reversal of the neurodegenerative diseases.

Interview with Dale Bredesen, neurologist and author of “The end of Alzheimer.

After continued research, a protocol was developed to treat or reverse Alzheimer’s disease. It factors the person’s nutritional imbalances to be corrected through the individualized assumption of supplements as well as a treatment plan of diet, sleep, stress management and the control on inflammation and insulin-resistance.

The American researcher has documented some cases of reversal of cognitive decline.

Paolo Emilia Cicerone

NUTRITION AS THERAPY

Page 13. FODMAP: An effective diet for the irritable bowel syndrome.

The irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is a bothersome disorder difficult to treat that can become disabling. In the last years studies have confirmed the benefits of a low FODMAP diet restricting the consumption of fermentable oligo-,di-, monosaccharides and polyols.

Paolo Campi

EDUCATION

Page 18: High school students learn PNEI

Psychoneuroendocrineimmunology as care of the body seen as a psychophysical unit. An innovative teaching experience at the Gramsci-Keynes - Liceo Scientifico Sportivo (High School for Math, Science and Sport Education) in Prato.

Chiara Burgassi, Nicola Barsotti

EDITORIAL

Publicly funded psychotherapies

David Lazzari

National Board of Italian Psychologists, Operative Unit for Psychology - Terni, former Sipnei President

Paolo Migone's article on the IATP program talks clearly: nothing can be taken for granted in the scientific and empiric fields. Evidences are required. Now we know that psychotherapy works and it can be used effectively and systemically on a large-scale program as an alternative or complementary to pharmacological treatments hence resulting in clinical and financial benefits.

The research shows how psychotherapy generally works and it is cost-effective (APA 2013, Lazzari 2013). If not every psychotherapy approach may work for all disorders (the criteria is to provide the appropriate treatment for the specific condition), all psychological interventions work for something. In many cases they prove to be better than pharmacological treatment and, if used in combination with drugs, the efficacy is increased.

Why then not using better and more often this modality of healthcare?

The answer to this question does not lie on the population. Indeed, as I have recently written, studies confirm that 3 persons on 4 prefer psychotherapy to medication. Preferences are very important as following the chosen treatment increases its efficacy of 31% while the possibilities of dropping it decrease of 59%. Nor have the costs anything to do with it. Indeed, according to a French study, an effective psychotherapy cycle, provided on a large-scale to people with major depression and severe anxiety, would allow a cost saving of 1,50 euro for every 1 euro spent. This happens thanks to the "restructuring" effect of the psychological therapies that enhance the individual's resources and build a new balance.

The answer to the above question lies on culture and organization.

It requires a shift from the old idea of psychotherapy seen as a private resource only for few to a more realistic and evidence-based conception of a publicly funded care for many.

The choice made by UK Government was supported by the study on efficacy of NICE and effectiveness from the London School of Economics. Today the English National Health Service (NHS) treat a million persons a year with a distinct improvement of 66,3% of the cases (2 on 3) and 51% of total recoveries (Clark, 2018). The protocol consists of a variety of psychological interventions on a large-scale, selection criteria, courses of intensity treatment and outcome measurements.

Rolling out psychotherapy treatments as a systemic part of the National Healthcare is possible also in Italy: our therapists are already trained (whereas in UK they had to be trained) and psychological assistance is included in the care (this was a great achievement!) as services guaranteed to the citizens by the State.

To implement this project it is necessary to increase the effectiveness of the public service in the local health unit centres (from primary care to psychological services) and to create a system including freelance professionals practicing within the

National Healthcare. The National Board of Italian Psychologists is working along with governmental institutions and important healthcare economists and clinical researchers. We need to learn from the Italian and international experiences in order to build a sustainable and generalizable model.

A survey undertaken in Veneto (now being carried at a national level) revealed that citizens would be willing to contribute to part of the costs in proportion to their income. As we are facing growing needs, it is time for us to build and provide a more functional and fair healthcare system.

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