

From the Editors

With great pleasure we release to our Readers a subsequent, very diverse and interesting issue of “Psychiatria Polska.” We are also extremely pleased to receive the newest information regarding the Impact Factor score obtained by Psychiatria Polska for the year 2020, amounting to 1.657.

The journal’s success is your success: the authors of excellent papers, reviewers, people who cite articles published in “Psychiatria Polska” and who contribute to the international prestige of our periodical.

It is not possible to express our gratitude to everyone by name; however, a few years ago we decided to award the prize “Friend of Psychiatria Polska” to honor an individual who substantially contributes to the journal’s development and promotion. The prize is granted every three years and is awarded during the Polish Psychiatric Association (PTP) Congress. This time, its laureate was Prof. dr hab. n. med. Janusz Rybakowski. In the current issue you will find Professor Rybakowski’s article on the etiopathogenesis of bipolar affective disorder, and we also strongly encourage you to familiarize yourselves with his triptych about a fifty-year participant observation, which appeared in successive issues in the previous year [1-3].

Certainly the most important event, which was lived and breathed by the Polish Psychiatric Association, was the 46th Congress of Polish Psychiatrists held under the banner of “Psychiatry in the face of changes,” organized in Szczecin on June 24-26 of this year. The leading theme of the Congress, finding reflection in the subject of many sessions – including plenary sessions and the sittings of the plenum of the General Board of PTP – and in backstage discussions, was the reform of psychiatric care in Poland.

The Congress was an opportunity to summarize the up-to-date achievements and the advancement of the change process. We were able to get familiar with the whole perspective, as related by Professor Małgorzata Janas-Kozik and Doctor Marek Balicki. We learned about practical local experiences from many centers in Poland. We had an opportunity to admire their successes and to discuss the challenges. Invited guests from abroad shared their experiences regarding the organization of psychiatric care in their countries, such as Belgium, the Czech Republic and Italy. A separate session was dedicated to problems related to the development of specialist programs and highly specialist tasks of psychiatric university clinics.

The Congress demonstrated that the affairs of psychiatric care reform are found at the center of attention of the Ministry of Health (minister Adam Niedzielski highlighted this in his direct message to the participants). Members of the Ministry of Health representing the Department of Public Health and the Department of Healthcare Services National Health Fund actively participated in discussions, announcing the acceleration of work on the implementation of a three-stage model of community care in our country, directed toward both children and adolescents, and adults.

The hosts of the Congress, Prof. Jerzy Samochowiec and Prof. Jolanta Kucharska-Mazur, pointed out that the changes awaiting us are multidimensional – clinical, scientific, and also personal. The sessions and meetings regarding contemporary views on psychiatric and psychological care were supposed to, according to the hosts, facilitate undertaking new challenges by the entire community of specialists dealing with mental healthcare in Poland.

As a result of the adopted resolution at the Congress, we appealed to the President of the Council of Ministers, Mateusz Morawiecki, to fulfill commitments and guarantee the

citizens of our country equal access to efficiently functioning mental healthcare, thanks to which we will be able to fully meet present needs and rise up to new challenges related to the pandemic. To accomplish this, the following is required: fulfillment of the goals of the National Mental Health Protection Program, urgent implementation of the necessary amendment to the Mental Health Protection Act, and increase of the level of funding for psychiatric care to a level of 6% of the funds allocated for health services financed from public revenue during the next three years.

The Congress participants expressed deep concern over the recent changes in the structure of the postgraduate internship. These changes are in conflict with the great prevalence of mental disorders in our country, both in the child and adolescent population and in the adult population, as well as with ensuring professional care for this group of patients. This is possible only in the situation of thorough undergraduate and postgraduate training of all doctors, not only those specialized in the field of psychiatry. In the wake of the earlier resolution of the General Board of PTP from January of this year, the 46th Congress of Polish Psychiatrists appealed for the restoration of the mandatory one-month postgraduate internship in psychiatry and the introduction of a mandatory one-month rotation in psychiatry as part of the medical specialization programs.

This Editorial does not aim at discussing all of the important topics covered during the Congress. Naturally, new problems related to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic were found among these topics. The pandemic was the cause of multiple changes of the date of the Congress, which ultimately was held in hybrid form, assembling over 150 participants “live,” whereas 650 individuals participated in sessions transmitted online. Despite these unusual circumstances, the Congress was excellently organized and all of the participants appreciated the enormous effort and professionalism of the organizing committee, especially colleagues from the Department of Psychiatry in Szczecin. During the Congress, a decision was made to hold the next PTP Congress together with the next PTP General Meeting; thus, already next year, in September in Łódź.

In his speech, the President of PTP, Prof. Jerzy Samochowiec, emphasized that the priorities of the Polish Psychiatric Association currently include intensive work on the reform of the psychiatric health services, creating community care psychiatry, and introducing a modern three-stage system of psychiatric care. Undoubtedly, the 46th PTP Congress will go down in history as a successive step on the path of implementing modern solutions, allowing transformation of Polish psychiatry toward a patient-friendly system, a system that is fair, offering all levels of support – from basic to advanced specialized procedures – without territorial and economic discrimination.

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References

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3. Rybakowski J. *Pół wieku obserwacji uczestniczącej w psychiatrii. Część III: psychofarmakologia.* Psychiatr. Pol. 2020; 54(5): 845–864.