

## **Relatives**

Counselling and support for relatives of mentally ill persons in Central Denmark Region

### **Counselling and support for relatives of patients in the psychiatry in Central Denmark Region**

In the psychiatry of Central Denmark Region, we consider adult relatives to be important support persons, serving as a mouthpiece for the patient, and they are therefore significant persons to the employees. The relatives also carry much responsibility in everyday life, having themselves the need for support, information and relief. Therefore, the employees must strive to create the best possible conditions for dialogue and meetings between the patient, the relatives and the network. This means that the contact person of the mentally ill person is obligated to clarify the patient's personal relations immediately after the patient's first contact with the psychiatric system.

In case of admission to a psychiatric department, the contact person from this department has to invite close relatives to a meeting within seven days from the day of admission to discuss the treatment plan, aims and expectations.

In the local psychiatry, the patient is requested, by letter, to bring relatives to the initial meeting, where treatment plan, aims and expectations are being discussed.

### **On the patient's terms**

To a large degree, the extent of co-operation is determined by the patient's wish to involve and inform his or her relatives. The employees are bound to observe professional secrecy, which means that they can only initiate concrete co-operation with the relatives if the patient wishes so. Professional secrecy – and with that the patient's right of self-determination – is a fundamental principle which is to be followed by the employees. However, it is always possible to receive general information about different mental disorders and their treatment.

### **The formal co-operation**

In autumn 2008, the psychiatry in Central Denmark Region has formulated a policy describing how to support the relatives. The policy issues clear guidelines for the employees concerning the care of the mentally ill patients' children. The policy is available at the website of the psychiatry of the Central Denmark Region:

[www.rm.dk/psykiatri+og+social](http://www.rm.dk/psykiatri+og+social).

In co-operation with relatives' organisations, the psychiatry of Central Denmark Region regularly arranges introduction evenings and courses for relatives. The subject of these introduction evenings and courses is presentation of knowledge of mental illness and of the possibilities of treatment and support. The courses emphasise knowledge interchange and dialogue between the course participants as well as between the teachers and the course participants. Time and place of the courses and introduction evenings are announced at the website.

### **Acute mental illness**

The Psychiatric Emergency Room at Aarhus University Hospital, Risskov, is a 24-hour service offering examination and if necessary referral to psychiatric treatment. The emergency room also offers telephonic or personalised counselling for patients and relatives.

Psychiatric Emergency Room  
Aarhus University Hospital, Risskov  
Skovagervej 2  
8240 Risskov  
Tel: 77 89 20 00

### **General practitioner**

Relatives can discuss their difficult situation with their general practitioner, and in specific cases, they can get a referral to a private practice psychologist with a National Health Service subsidy.

### **Associations and counselling for relatives**

The9 (Federation of Associations of Relatives of Mentally Ill in Central Denmark) and the national association BETTER PSYCHIATRY are both large interest groups, providing counselling and support to the relatives of mentally ill people, either over the telephone or at personal meetings.

The national association BETTER PSYCHIATRY has local branches region-wide. The main number of the national association is +45 35 25 46 00, e-mail: [info@bedrepsykiatri.aaa.dk](mailto:info@bedrepsykiatri.aaa.dk). You may find the local branches either by contacting the main office or by visiting [www.bedrepsykiatri.aaa.dk](http://www.bedrepsykiatri.aaa.dk)

The9 (Federation of Associations of Relatives of Mentally Ill in Central Denmark) is an umbrella organisation and consists of the associations: Danish Association for Mental Health (SIND) – Advice and Guidance for Relatives, the ADHD association in Aarhus, the Danish Huntington Association, PS National association – families of people with eating disorders, The OCD Association in Aarhus, The conditions of the mentally ill and Autism Denmark

The organisation is located at Aarhus University Hospital, Risskov, building 23, Skovagervej 2, Risskov and has counselling facilities at other locations in Central Denmark Region. To get contact information on each of the organisations in the9, you may call the main number +45 77 89 32 70 or visit [www.DE9.dk](http://www.DE9.dk).

### **The Danish Mental Health Fund** (phone counselling for consumers and relatives)

Phone: 39 25 25 25

Monday – Friday: 11 – 23, Saturday – Sunday: 11 – 19

[www.psykiatrifonden.dk](http://www.psykiatrifonden.dk)

**PsykInfo**

PsykInfo is a library and information centre which offers information on mental disorders, treatment, social matters and various activities for mentally ill people. Everyone can borrow or buy books and booklets on mental disorders, and the centre publishes an electronic newsletter, that everybody can subscribe to. PsykInfo organises public evening information sessions which are advertised in the local papers. Furthermore, PsykInfo is a patient library – a mini public library for inpatients.

**PsykInfo**

Aarhus University Hospital, Risskov

Skovagervej 2

8240 Risskov

77 89 32 30

E-mail: [psykinfo@psykiatri.aaa.dk](mailto:psykinfo@psykiatri.aaa.dk)

Web: [www.psykinfo.dk](http://www.psykinfo.dk)

Opening hours:

Monday, Wednesday and Friday: 12 – 15

Tuesday: Closed

Thursday: 10 – 15

Place of publication: Aarhus University Hospital, Risskov, Central Denmark Region.

2008