

Mental Health 2008

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Definitions

- Health
- Mental Health
- Malady
- Mental disorders
- Promotion of health
- Success of health programmes

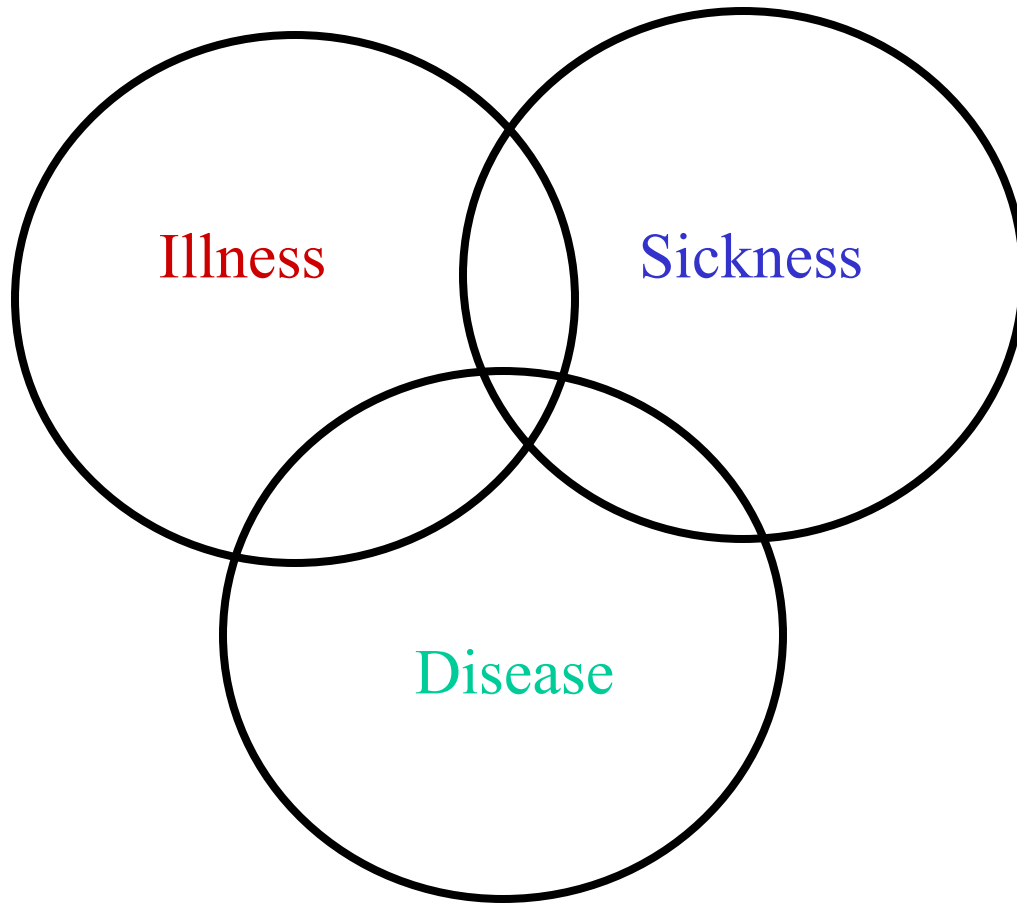
Health

- Health could be defined
 - As the absence of illness
 - As normal functioning in social and personal roles
 - As a state of balance within oneself and between oneself and the environment.

Mental health

- Could be defined as
 - A component of health
 - Normal mental functioning
 - A mental equilibrium, being in harmony with ones' capacities, and with people around us

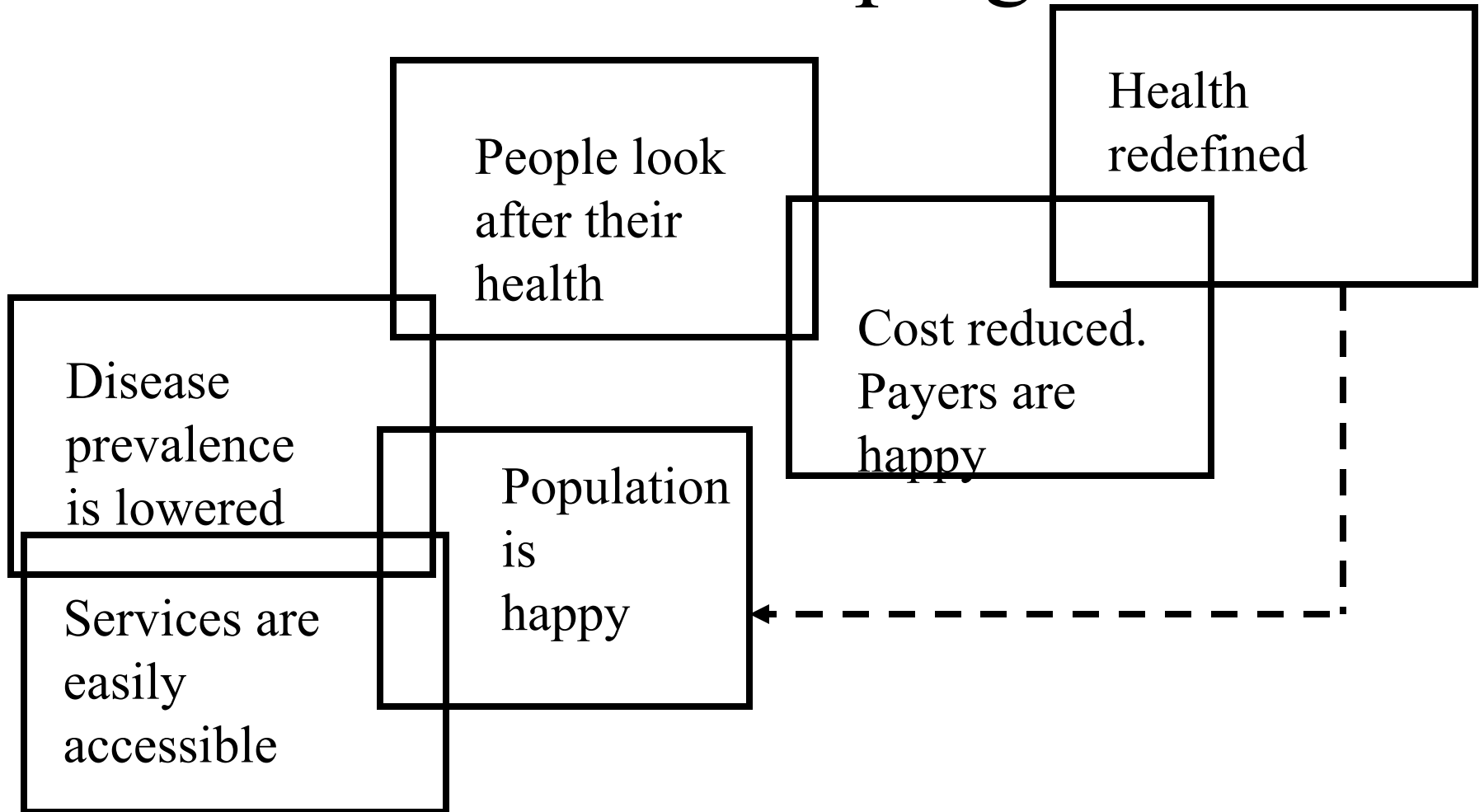
Malady



Promotion of health

- Promotion of health (or mental health) can be defined as
 - The reduction of the numbers of people with diseases
 - An improvement of the coping capacity of an individual or a population
 - A raise of mental health on the scale of values of individuals and communities.

Success of health programmes



Mental disorders: magnitude of the problem

- Worldwide, approximately 500 million people suffer from mental disorders
- Depression alone will be the second most important cause of disability in 2020: currently 5 of the ten most important contributors to the disease burden are mental disorders
- Approximately 800.000 people die every year because of suicide: this is a number that is higher than that of death caused by malaria.

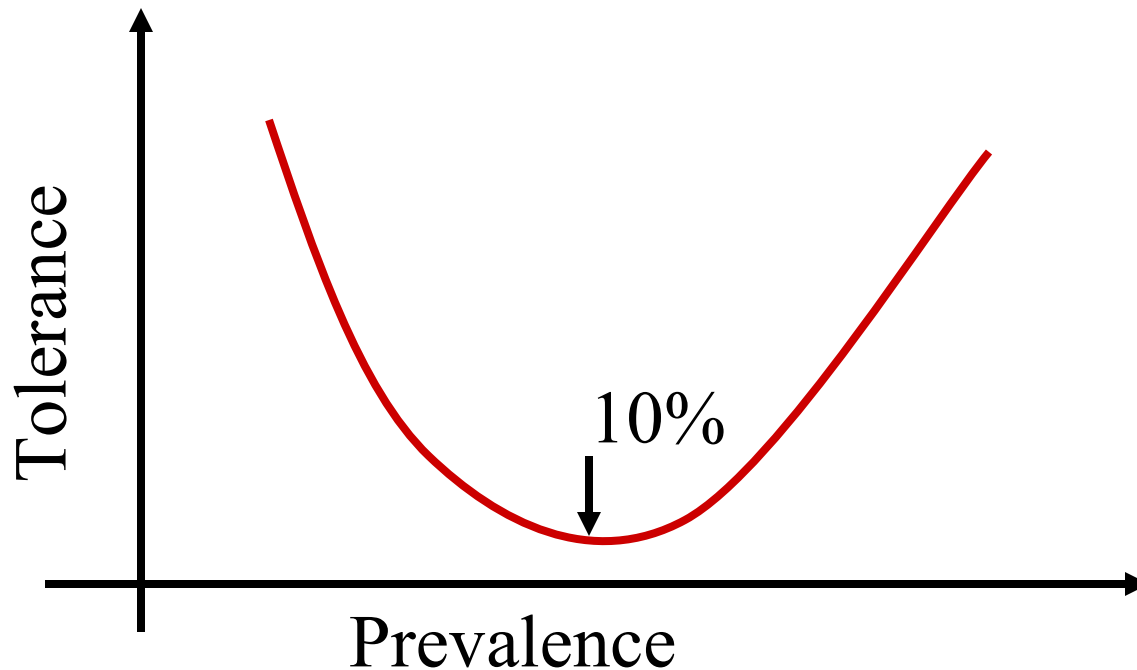
Mental disorders: magnitude of the problem

- Mental disorders carry a stigma that spreads horizontally and vertically
- Several of the major mental disorders require continued care
- The presence of a mental disorder in a household increases the need for health services of all its members.

Mental disorders:magnitude of the problem

- Mental disorders are often comorbid with physical illness: comorbidity worsens the prognosis of both diseases unless both are treated simultaneously (and well)
- The traditional systems of support for people with mental disorders are weakened or disappear in most parts of the world.

Prevalence and tolerance of those who are different



Mental health care: resources

- The main sources of mental health care are
 - Families or other non-paid carers
 - Mental health services
 - Health services
 - Social services
 - Charitable organizations
 - Community members

Mental health care: resources

- Family support to people with mental disorders is weakening because of the reduced family stability and size and because the willingness to take on care of others is continuously weakening
- Stigma of mental illness harms all family members and increases the probability of separation of patients from families

Mental health care: resources

- Schools of medicine do not provide the skills and knowledge needed to appropriately manage mental disorder – nor do they inform about the magnitude of the problem and its solutions.
- The selection of PG psychiatry candidates is in many countries negative

Mental health professionals and economic development

Countries, by income

	<u>Low/low-middle</u>	<u>high-middle/high</u>
Psychiatrists	0.05-1.05*	2.70-10.50
Psychologists	0.04-0.60	1.80-14.00
Psychiatric nurses	0.16-1.05	5.35-32-95
Social workers	0.04-0.28	1.50-15.70

*Number per 100.000 inhabitants

Mental Health Care: trends in the context of services

- Commoditification
- Decivilization
- Changes of the middle class
- Changes of the ethos of medicine
- Failures of successes
- Rapid change and instability
- Destruction of the social capital

Changes of the ethos of medicine

- Reduction of pain assumes high priority
- The duty to live is replaced by the right to die
- Supportive paternalism gives way to contracts and equal status of patients and doctors.
- Self-reliance and independence replace reliance on others and interdependence.

Effective but not very popular solutions

- Emphasis on prevention (entailing a change of roles of psychiatrists and others)
- New strategies for the introduction of mental health into general health care
- Reformulation of tenets of community care
- Investment into the promotion of mental health

Effective but not very popular solutions

- Change of medical undergraduate and postgraduate curricula
- Regular and significant investment into activities to fight stigma
- International collaboration in research

New tenets of community care

- Substantial support to carers (e.g. 24/7 availability of help, sufficient financial support, streamlined education,)
- Non-geographic definition of community care
- Careful *selection* and *education* of community care health workers
- Delegation of authority as well as of responsibility to the periphery

Introduction of mental health into general health care: new views

- In-service education of health staff interested in mental health, not of all staff.
- Education by teams of psychiatrists, carers and non-psychiatric physicians
- Emphasis on skills, not on knowledge
- Focus on a limited number of conditions
- Tailoring service (and training for it) to local conditions

Conclusions

- Mental disorders are a major, yet not recognized public health problem
- Overall development trends in society and in medicine are likely to make the situation worse
- There are effective solutions to the problem but they require major changes of people and bureaucracies

Conclusions

- There are signs that change is happening, but slowly – leaving most of the unnecessary misery and suffering due to mental illness untouched
- The next generation of doctors could make the change happen, worldwide.