

Thumbnail Image:

the 1990s, the number of people with a mental health problem has increased by 50% (Mental Health Foundation 2000).

There is a growing awareness of the need to address the needs of people with mental health problems in the community. The Department of Health (1999) has set out a vision for the future of mental health services, which includes a focus on preventing mental health problems, promoting recovery, and supporting people with mental health problems to live in the community. This vision is reflected in the Mental Health Act 1983, which has been amended to reflect the changing needs of people with mental health problems.

The purpose of this paper is to explore the experiences of people with mental health problems who are living in the community. The paper will focus on the experiences of people who are living with a mental health problem and who are not currently receiving mental health services.

The paper will first explore the experiences of people with mental health problems who are living in the community. It will then discuss the challenges that people with mental health problems face when living in the community. Finally, it will discuss the role of mental health services in supporting people with mental health problems to live in the community.

Introduction

The number of people with a mental health problem has increased significantly in the last 20 years. In the UK, the number of people with a mental health problem has increased by 50% since 1980 (Mental Health Foundation 2000).

This increase has been attributed to a number of factors, including changes in the way that mental health problems are diagnosed, changes in the way that mental health services are organized, and changes in the way that people with mental health problems are treated.

One of the most significant changes has been the move from a focus on treating mental health problems to a focus on preventing mental health problems. This has led to a greater emphasis on supporting people with mental health problems to live in the community.

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Methodology

The data for this paper were collected through a series of focus group discussions with people who are living with a mental health problem and who are not currently receiving mental health services. The focus group discussions were conducted in a community center in London.

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Finding Missing Migrants ^[1]


This holiday season, more than 50 million people in the U.S. alone will travel home to spend time with their families. Unfortunately, there are thousands of families across the globe who won't have that chance.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) estimates that every year, hundreds of thousands of people leave their homes in search of a better life, but many of these people disappear along the way, seemingly without a trace. To bring answers to the families left behind, the ICRC launched a new website: **MissingMigrants.icrc.org**, which aims to inform the international community about the people who go missing during the migration process and their families' anguish.

The website uses a compelling mix of Polaroid photographs, video footage and handwritten messages to express the pain and suffering of the families of missing migrants. In June 2107, ICRC photographer Kathryn Cook-Pellegrin met these families in Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico and traveled with migrants walking the route for three weeks. She collected the photographs and testimonies to tell these families' stories in their own words and pictures. In an article published by the Thomson Reuters Foundation, Cook stated that nothing could have prepared her for meeting with the families of missing migrants, who were "desperate for any sign of life from their loved ones."

The stories are heart-wrenching. One of the individuals profiled, Olga Edelmira Romero Medina (pictured, above), disappeared eight years ago when she left Honduras to find work in North America. Even though much time has passed, her mother and five children continue to search for her. Another individual is Salomé Oxlaj, who hasn't been seen since February 2011. In a video interview posted on the Missing Migrants website, his wife in Guatemala tearfully recounts her efforts to find him as she sits next to their young son.

The ICRC explains  that migrants are considered missing when their families cannot establish contact. Sometimes the migrants are detained without access to communication, and other times they perish along dangerous migration routes, where their remains may not be found or identified. Whatever the reason for the disappearance, the ICRC does its best to find out what happened and, if possible, to bring the missing person home.

The ICRC considers this work a part of its humanitarian diplomacy , which it defines as "persuading decision makers and opinion leaders to act, at all times, in the interests of vulnerable people, and with the full respect for fundamental humanitarian principles."

One can argue that the ICRC's efforts are needed more now than at any other time in the last 50 years.

In 2016, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) warned that "opinion polls in a wide range of countries suggest that the share of the public holding extreme anti-immigration views has grown." That same year, CNN and other Western media described

the backlash against international migration within the European Union and restrictions on asylum seekers and irregular migrants within the United States and Australia.

Humanitarian diplomacy has assumed unprecedented prominence in the 21st century. Organizations like the ICRC and the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) speak regularly at the U.N. Security Council and other world fora.

Unfortunately, not all of the changes have been positive.

In 2016, U.N. Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees Kelly T. Clements described the “erosion of respect” for humanitarian workers. According to Clements, “the sanctity of humanitarian personnel, and the protection previously afforded by their mission, status and visible logos, has deteriorated to the point that in many conflicts, the UNHCR and others are deliberately targeted.” Attacks on humanitarian staff causes organizations to pull their staff from challenging environments, which impedes their ability to practice humanitarian diplomacy and to be perceived as impartial.

Nevertheless, using new technologies—as the ICRC has done to help find missing migrants—may provide new ways to maintain the security of staff as they continue to act in the interests of the world’s most vulnerable people.

Photo of Olga Edelmira Romero Medina, who disappeared after leaving Honduras in 2009. Image courtesy of ICRC Missing Migrants website (Credit: Kathryn Cook-Pellegrin).
