



The Pyramid of Family Care: A framework for family involvement with adult mental health services

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Abstract

Working with families of patients with severe mental illness has proven to be effective in reducing the relapse rate for patients and the distress level of families. However, there is no general framework available for adult mental health professionals on incorporating family work in their everyday practice. The Pyramid of Family Care discussed in this paper is based on the same conceptual work as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. The bottom levels include the family's basic needs for information about the illness and orientation to the mental health service. This contrasts with the top level which represents complex needs for interventions such as intensive family therapy. This paper will expand on this model of family care. The different levels of the Pyramid will be discussed and a minimum level of care defined.

Keywords

mental health services, mental disorders, family education, psychoeducation, family therapy, mental health professionals

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