

"EMPLOYMENT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN THE HEALTH SYSTEM: PERSPECTIVE AND PERCEPTION OF OFFICIALS."

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BACKGROUND

Person with disabilities is a person with a physical, mental or intellectual impairment, including cognitive, permanent or temporary, in which his or her functioning is substantially limited in one or more of the main life aspects (Equal Rights for People with Disabilities Law, 1998). Strong associations were found between employment and creating a normal working and living culture for disabled people.

There are many benefits for employers in increasing profits and reducing government tax and the possibility of legal litigation. Never the less, employers have difficulties in training disabled workers due to high economical costs of the training process. Disabled employees report lack of facilities and many barriers in company policies. They cope with physical and psycho-social difficulties that create acceptance problems. It seems that the difficulties are higher than the benefits. The health system is important component in providing services for the public. Little information about employment of disabled people in health organizations in Israel.

RESULTS

Four content experts were interviewed: two in the mental health department of the Ministry of Health, one deputy director of a hospital, one nurse in charge of a department. Duration of interview: about one hour. Four main themes were identified:

"When you work with a disability that is responsible for taking a biopsy, if it gets confused and forgets, then for us it is something that can not happen, it requires a lot of good will on our part and readiness for the challenge, we are very much aware of the importance of this, where there is a matter of saving lives We need to be much more careful" (Interviewee 3).

"We have a very weak population that we decided to empower, which we want to enlist in our ranks, and in fact help them in the field of employment that will give them a livelihood and help them in personal empowerment." (Interviewee 1)

"What I would like is a situation in which both the rehabilitation system and the community and hospitalization system have certain percentages of mentally handicapped people, who inspire in all areas of the profession, not necessarily therapists." (Interviewee 2).

"To absorb people with disabilities into various positions within the department, they will be able to integrate well and make it easier for the nurses, who in the daily work deal with many tasks that take a lot of time to provide treatment to patients" (interviewee 4).

"In mental health, everyone is employed. This is part of our concept. We do not want to volunteer, we pay them like every worker. A perfectly normal wage is part of the concept. And we even gave them the salary as an act of expression of progress in the job so that they would feel like the rest of the other medical teams" (Interviewee 2).

"We do not meet the maximum, the guidelines talk about something like up to 3%, and it seems to me that this is a high rate for us, since we employ about 4,300 employees" (interviewee 3).

"Nursing has a number of good qualities that can help ... that can provide precise guidance with some kind of control of the training process ... nursing is a central force in the nursing hospital has the heart and empathy to make those around us accept it as true" (Interviewee 3).

"It's a golden opportunity for the nursing staff to get out of the comfort zone and explore what else they can do given the situation of people who enrich their knowledge and abilities is a very interesting adventure for them." (Interviewee 1).



AIMS

- * To understand factors affecting the employment status of workers with disabilities (including mental illness) in the Israeli health system.
- secondary targets:**
- * To examine the perceptions of workers at different levels in the health system regarding the employment of workers with disabilities in the health system.
- * To describe the benefits and challenges of employing workers with disabilities in the health system.
- * To expose the barriers that the health system faces in employing workers with disabilities.

METHODS

Qualitative research was conducted, approved by a ethics committee of health faculty at BGU. Critical sample of four stakeholders in different levels in the Israeli Ministry of Health that deal with the subject of promoting employment of disabled people, or have a managerial position in the health system.

DISCUSSION

An amendment to the "Equal Rights for People with Disabilities Law -1998" came into action on August 2016. This amendment stated that a public organization that employs over one hundred workers has an adequate representation for people with disabilities, in the rate no less of 5% of all employees. This amendment had a significant impact on the execution of this study. HR managers did not collaborate in interviews and did not want to reveal employment data. In fact, health organizations do not meet the requirements of the law. People that agreed to be interviewed, reported that one of the reasons for having difficulty to combine disabled workers in the health system is the fear of them doing a mistake that can cost in patients life. The employment of