

S43. The national scientific psychiatric associations: their role in the development of psychiatry

NATIONAL SCIENTIFIC PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATIONS

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Scientific medical associations are organisations through which the profile of a speciality can be generated and brought about to members and to the population. For psychiatry - a speciality about which so to speak all and sundry feel that they can contribute to treatment - the scientific associations have a major responsibility in outlining the speciality as an academic medical profession. In Denmark psychiatrists are organised in two separate associations, one with the character of a union and another dealing with development of science in psychiatry, post-graduate education and treatment conditions for psychiatric patients.

However, the way in which the psychiatric organisations work differs from country to country and in some of the East European countries they are still in the process of organising and profiling the psychiatric speciality. For the purpose of improving the image of psychiatry, exchange of ideas and experiences obtained in different national associations is considered useful.

PSYCHIATRY IN THE COUNTRIES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION: THE ROLE OF PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATIONS

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Psychiatry in the various European countries has developed as a result of a variety of influences, some of which are unique for each particular country. One is therefore entitled to talk about Psychiatry in Europe but not about "European Psychiatry" (as a comprehensive system of scientific thought and practice, common to all European countries). However, in recent years, common diagnostic systems and common management practices have developed as a result of increased exchange of psychiatric information and know-how. Also, the European Union framework has contributed to the convergence of psychiatric training and practice. Establishment of the Psychiatry Section of the European Union of Medical Practitioners (J.E.M.S.) in April 1992 and of the European Board of Psychiatry in October 1992 will further contribute to the "harmonization" of psychiatric practice in Europe. Psychiatric associations have a key role to play because it is their representatives who constitute these two important management bodies and additionally the Associations are the basic catalysts for the implementation of the decisions of the UEMS which aim at psychiatric integration in Europe.