

## **The Importance of Mental Health Literacy: Interventions in a Psychiatry Service of Hospital José Joaquim Fernandes, Portugal**

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**Abstract :** Introduction: Health literacy empowers people of knowledge, motivation and skills to access, understand, evaluate and mobilize information relating to health. Although the benefits of public knowledge of physical disease are widely accepted, knowledge about mental disorder has been compatibly neglected. Nowadays there is considerably evidence that literacy is of great importance for the promotion of health and prevention of mental illness. Objective: Disclosure the concept and importance of mental health literacy and introduce the literacy program of Psychiatry Service of Hospital José Joaquim Fernandes. Methodology: A search was conducted on PubMed, using keywords "literacy" and "mental health". A description of mental health literacy interventions implemented on Psychiatry Service of Hospital José Joaquim Fernandes was performed, namely, psychoeducation programs for depression and bipolar disorder. Results and discussion: Health literacy enables patient to be able to actively participate in his treatment. The improving of mental health literacy can promote early identification of mental disorders, improve treatment results, increase the use of health services and allow the community to take action to achieve better mental health. Psychoeducation is very useful in improving the course of disease and in reducing the number of episodes and hospitalizations. Bipolar patients who received psychoeducation and pharmacotherapy have no relapses during the program and last year. Conclusion: Mental health literacy is not simply a matter of having knowledge, rather, it is knowledge linked to action which can benefit mental health.

**Keywords :** mental health, literacy, psychoeducation, knowledge, empowerment

**Conference Title :** ICMH 2017 : International Conference on Mental Health

**Conference Location :** Berlin, Germany

**Conference Dates :** May 21-22, 2017