



Π.Ο.Ε.Δ.Η.Ν.

ΠΑΝΕΛΛΗΝΙΑ ΟΜΟΣΠΟΝΔΙΑ ΕΡΓΑΖΟΜΕΝΩΝ ΔΗΜΟΣΙΩΝ ΝΟΣΟΚΟΜΕΙΩΝ
PANHellenic FEDERATION OF PUBLIC HOSPITAL WORKERS

ΜΕΛΟΣ ΑΔΕΔΥ • MEMBER ADEDY

ATHENS 19/11/2013
PROTOCOL.NO.: 2305

TO: LASZLO ANDOR
EUROPEAN COMMISSIONER FOR EMPLOYMENT
SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND INCLUSION

EUROPEAN COMMISSION
B-1049 BRUSSELS

Dear Mr Commissioner,

The Greek Government through the Minister of Health Mr Adonis Georgiadis is imposing the Dissolution of Public Mental Health which in our country is provided mainly by the Public Psychiatric Hospitals. Citing the MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING between you and the former Greek Health Minister Mr A.Lykourentzos for the completion of the Psychiatric Reform in the year 2015, the Health Minister incorporates the Public Psychiatric Hospitals and the professionals who serve in these into the Fiscal Adjustment MEMORANDUM.

Highly skilled Mental Health professionals all of whom are members of therapy groups and were trained through continuous training programs funded by the European Social Funds are being sacrificed for the achievement of the FISCAL OBJECTIVES OF THE GOVERNMENT.

The only purpose served by the inclusion of Psychiatric Hospitals into the FISCAL ADJUSTMENT MEMORANDUM is for the majority of Mental Health professionals to be put in a relocation pool and for the State to 'get rid' of the running costs of these facilities.

The Public Mental Health of the country has been generously funded by European Funds in order to abolish the Psychiatric Inpatient Services.

However, with the country held responsible for it, the appropriate and necessary Public Mental Health Units (Primary, In-patient Care, Psychosocial Rehabilitation) that would support the **Sectored Mental Health Services Network** and would meet the needs of each reference population, have not been developed.

The Mental Health professionals naturally seek to work in the transformed Public Community Mental Health Units.

The government's decision to assign non-active status to a large number of the few mental health professionals results into the dissolution of Mental Health Services, as it weakens the smooth functioning of the Mental Health Care Units and poses threat to the identified necessities for implementing the Psychiatric Reform. The former national government, also applying **FISCAL ADJUSTMENT MEMORANDA** in the merging of Regional

Psychiatric Hospitals to the General Hospitals in the cities where they were founded, at least respected the particularity and investment that was required from the Mental Health Professionals and authorities for their training by adopting a provision of law (N.4052/2012 article 30, 31 paragraph 5) for their mandatory employment in the transported Mental Health Services to the General Hospitals (Psychiatric Units, Health Centres, Deinstitutionalisation Units and Professional Rehabilitation). The Psychiatric Hospitals and the Public Mental Care Units are understaffed thanks to the MEMORANDA (zero recruitments, massive retirements) and employment of permanent personnel is demanded rather than the imposed relocation of mental health professionals to other Health Services. Non-active status of Professionals, even for a short time, cannot be compensated in order to ensure even the minimum quality of services offered.

The Psychiatric Hospitals had developed a rich network of services providing Primary Services, as well as Admissions, Deinstitutionalisation and Professional Rehabilitation.

Their abolition brings down the Mental Health System of the country, as especially concerning the in-patients (60% under public prosecutor's request) the respective Public Units have not been developed.

70% of the admissions of mental health patients take place in the Psychiatric Hospitals since on one hand the Mental Health System was not Sectorised and consequently not accompanied by the development of appropriate mental health units in the General Hospitals and on the other hand, the Primary Health Care Units were not increased so as to stem the demand for admissions (Mental Health Centres).

The competent Mental Health Directorate acknowledges that the Mental Health professionals in Psychiatric Hospitals are not sufficient for the transformation, reform of the hospitals. The coverage lies between 40% and 65%. The Mental Health professionals seek to provide offsets of the accumulated knowledge gained by the continuous education under Community Funds. These offsets will be attributable to the reformed and further developed Public Mental Health Services.

Yet, in our country with the erratic government decisions, they are evolving in 'guinea pigs' for the FISCAL ADJUSTMENT MEMORANDUM.

The Public Mental Health is falling apart instead of further developing to out-patient care. Millions of euros have been invested in the construction, operation of Mental Health Units, as well as in Human Resources and they are being neglected by the dangerous Health Minister. He is dismantling everything down overnight.

You should intervene with the Minister of Health to stop bundling up the Memorandum of Understanding for Psychiatric Reform with the FISCAL ADJUSTMENT MEMORANDA. The European Commission and the Greek government should accept, with actions and not just talk, that the Mental Health professionals are too few to implement the program of Psychiatric Reform. The European Commission should impose the necessary recruitment of personnel. Despite all the above mentioned, the Health Minister, with dangerous acrobatic manoeuvres integrates the Psychiatric Reform into the MEMORANDA resulting into the reduction of social spending and the Dismissals of Civil Servants. He is causing the demise of the Mental Health Care System which was supported through tens of millions of euros both from the European Union and the State Budget.

The Psychiatric Hospitals and the Psychiatric Units of the General Hospitals operate under occupancy rate of 140% in acute cases. Overcapacity patients receive treatment in

cots and on the Chronic Wards. The patient care standards are unacceptable. Patients include incidents of welfare services jurisdiction, homeless, substance abusers, prisoners under the article 69 of the Criminal Code, detainees in police custody. For the aforementioned patients' categories, the necessary infrastructure has not been developed and therefore those patients are being hospitalised together with the mentally ill ones. The social events serve the public Prosecutor's Request and for this reason the percentage of court orders for committal amounts to 60% of the admissions to mental health institutions.

Your direct intervention is imperative in order to stop the Minister of Health from continuing going downhill, in a period of time when the Public Services for Mental Health Care are essential, since the vastly growing number of mental patients and of the suicidal rate are directly correlated to the fiscal policies pursued.

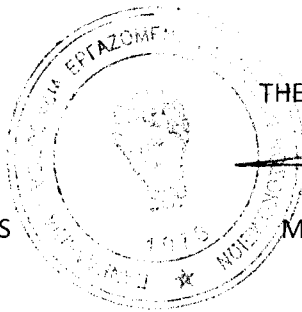
Sincerely,

PANHELLENIC FEDERATION OF PUBLIC HOSPITAL WORKERS (POEDHN)

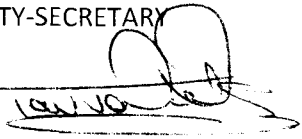
THE PRESIDENT



STAVROS KOUTSIOUMPELIS



THE DEPUTY-SECRETARY



MICHALIS YIANAKOS