Crisis Service in the Ukraine Provided During the Revolution of Dignity and the War in Donbass

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Abstract

The aim of this short communication was to investigate volunteer psychological service in the Ukraine, which was created during the Revolution of Dignity. Currently, the volunteer psychological service consists of more than 500 participants from different regions in the Ukraine. The current goals of the volunteer psychological service are:

- Psychological assistance to families whose relatives were killed during the Revolution of Dignity;

- Support to internally displaced people from Crimea and the Eastern part of the Ukraine;

- Preparation of soldiers before and during military actions;

- Support to those who need help after been in captivity;

- Crisis assistance to those who were injured during involvement in military actions.

Revolution of dignity in the Ukraine started on November 21, 2013. Later on hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians settled on Independence Square (Maidan Nezalezhnosti) in Kyiv, Ukraine for months.

Maidan Volunteer Psychological Service was founded on December 2, 2013 in Kyiv to decrease the gap between the need for mental health services and the use of such services (wait times, availability of providers, confidentiality, stigmatization). This initiative included psychologists, psychotherapists and psychiatrists from all over the Ukraine. This service provided professional, social and psychological help for those who needed it. During three and a half month, more than 15,482 people requested a psychological help. The most frequent complaints were fear, anxiety, frustration, family and other conflicts, sleep problems, aggression, loneliness, addiction, and etc. After February 18-21, 2014 increased the number of inquiries regarding feelings of grief and loss, the uncertainty of the future and anxiety regarding country integrity [1]. The information of psychological service were regularly announced on different social networks (Facebook, Vkontakte, etc.), later channel in YouTube was created.

The annexation of Crimea by the Russia was on the March of 2014, following by the war in Donbass (the eastern part of the Ukraine). Non-profit organization "Association of professionals who work with people after traumatic events" was created based on Maidan Volunteer Psychological Service. It consists of more than 500 participants from different regions in the Ukraine. The current goals of organizations are:

- psychological assistance to families whose relatives were killed during the "Revolution of Dignity" and Anti-terrorist Operation (ATO);

- psychological support to internally displaced people from Crimea and the Eastern part of the Ukraine;

- psychological preparation of soldiers before and during military actions;

- psychological support to those who needed help after been in captivity;

- psychological crisis assistance to those who were injured during involvement in military actions [2].

Doctors without Borders (Medicine Sans Frontiers) provided several "Post Traumatic Stress Disorder" seminars in April 2014 in Kyiv for mental health professionals. On August 21 2014, twenty Ukrainian mental health workers and clergy had a training and support from colleagues at Yale School of Medicine [3,4] with the support of the Open World Leadership Center, an agency of the US Congress [5]. Later on "Association of professionals who work with people after traumatic events" provided seminars on "acute stress disorders", "post-traumatic stress disorder", "the first psychological aid", "work with wounded people", "crisis statuses" etc. in different regions of the Ukraine (Dnipropetrovsk, Ivano-Frankivsk, Kherson, Kyiv, Luboml, Mariupol, Slavyansk, Summy, Vinnitsa, Zaporizhia).

On December 5-6, 2014 the International Conference "Crisis in the Ukraine – psychotherapeutic approaches" was held at Sigmund Freud University in Vienna, Austria [6]. The main message of this conference was brought to the initial goal of the psychotherapy, which should help people to obtain a psychological well-being and reestablish mental health.

As an example, from September to December 2014 two hundred and twenty five participants from ATO were admitted to Kirovohrad Hospital for those who became disabled in World War II, 57 of them had individual program of psychological rehabilitation, which was created by local psychologists, based on the experience from American and Israel specialists. More than 20 sessions of group psychotherapy and re-socialization trainings were performed. By December 2014, twelve volunteer-psychologists are involved in the work [7].

The current report designates a need for psychosocial intervention in the population experienced prolonged armed conflict.

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