BRIDGING THE GAP: HOW PSYCHIATRY ALIENATED FROM MEDICINE? AND HOW TO MOVE NOW FORWARD!

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Psychiatry is a medical speciality. Yet in many (European) countries mental health is considered and remunerated differently from other medical specialties. Discrimination of psychiatric patients is at hand both implicitly in the public opinion as explicitly in the (medical) legislation in different countries of the EU.

How did this happen and who to blame. It must be said, unfortunately, that psychiatrists have also contributed to this negative image, but labelling psychiatric disorders as different and by acting themselves differently in terms of 'medical' availability as compared to other medical specialists.

Recently president Obama of the United States boldly took position to underscore the rights of patients with mental disorders as equal to those of any other fellow citizen. This sound should be heard in Europe too.

Moreover psychiatrists should take responsibility and action to regain their position within the corps of medical specialists. In this presentation an overview of how psychiatrists and psychiatry got into this as wrong as uncomfortable position will be given, alongside a proposal for a change for the better to get there where psychiatric patients are entitled to be and where psychiatry should be in the perspective of the recently endorsed WHO Mental Health Action Plan.