

**Mental health nursing: assistance in a changing scenario***Enfermería en salud mental: asistencia en un escenario cambiante**Enfermagem em saúde mental: a assistência em um cenário de mudanças***João Vitor Ferreira Cairo<sup>1</sup>**

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**Submission:** 09-16-2020**Approval:** 09-30-2020**Abstract**

The aim was to identify in the scientific literature the nursing care in mental health in the Brazilian context, given the challenges imposed by the Psychiatric Reform. It is an integrative literature review. The data collection used descriptors relevant to the theme and was carried out through the internet, in the MEDLINE, LILACS and BDNF databases. The sample consisted of 19 articles, divided into thematic axes related to the performance of the nursing professional in care and its challenges, and the implications of the Psychiatric Reform in this process. The practice of professionals can be seen in the Brazilian context, in general hospitals and in primary care, and in the mental health devices. Psychiatric Reform is a guiding principle for more comprehensive and humanized care. Challenges in assistance were also perceived, such as physical and mental strain on the professional, as well as devaluation of knowledge. The productions approached a nursing active in the most diverse fields of mental health, being guided by the Psychiatric Reform and focusing on the patient, however there are still many challenges and advances inherent to the profession in this context. To this end, greater recognition of their actions and qualities is necessary, in addition to measures focusing on the promotion of their biopsychosocial health.

**Descriptors:** Psychiatric Nursing; Mental Health; Evidence-Based Nursing; Health Services Reform; Nursing Care.

**Resumen**

El objetivo fue identificar en la literatura científica el cuidado de enfermería en salud mental en el contexto brasileño, ante los desafíos impuestos por la Reforma Psiquiátrica. Es una revisión integradora de la literatura. La recolección de datos utilizó descriptores relevantes al tema y se realizó a través de Internet, en las bases de datos MEDLINE, LILACS y BDNF. La muestra estuvo conformada por 19 artículos, divididos en ejes temáticos relacionados con el desempeño del profesional de enfermería en el cuidado y sus desafíos, y las implicaciones de la Reforma Psiquiátrica en este proceso. La práctica de los profesionales se puede ver en el contexto brasileño, en los hospitales generales y en la atención primaria, y en los dispositivos de salud mental. La Reforma Psiquiátrica es un principio rector para una atención más integral y humanizada. También se percibieron desafíos en la asistencia, como tensión física y mental en el profesional, así como desvalorización de conocimientos. Las producciones se acercaron a una enfermería activa en los más diversos campos de la salud mental, guiándose por la Reforma Psiquiátrica y enfocándose en el paciente, sin embargo aún existen muchos desafíos y avances inherentes a la profesión en este contexto. Para ello, es necesario un mayor reconocimiento de sus acciones y cualidades, además de medidas centradas en la promoción de su salud biopsicosocial.

**Descriptores:** Enfermería Psiquiátrica; Salud Mental; Enfermería Basada en Evidencias; Reforma de los Servicios de Salud; Cuidado de Enfermería.

**Resumo**

Objetivou-se identificar na literatura científica a assistência de enfermagem em saúde mental no contexto brasileiro, perante os desafios impostos pela Reforma Psiquiátrica. Trata-se de uma revisão integrativa da literatura. O levantamento de dados utilizou descritores pertinentes ao tema e foi realizado por meio da internet, nas bases MEDLINE, LILACS e BDNF. A amostra foi de 19 artigos, divididos em eixos temáticos relativos à atuação do profissional de enfermagem na assistência e seus desafios, e as implicações da Reforma Psiquiátrica neste processo. A prática dos profissionais pode ser percebida no contexto brasileiro, nos hospitais gerais e na atenção básica, e nos dispositivos próprios da saúde mental. A Reforma Psiquiátrica apresenta-se como eixo norteador para um cuidado mais integral e humanizado. Perceberam-se ainda desafios na assistência como desgaste físico e mental ao profissional, bem como desvalorização dos conhecimentos. As produções abordaram uma enfermagem atuante nos mais diversos campos da saúde mental, sendo norteada pela Reforma Psiquiátrica e com enfoque no paciente, porém ainda há muitos desafios e avanços inerentes a profissão neste contexto. Para tal, faz-se necessário maior reconhecimento de suas ações e qualidades, além de medidas com enfoque a promoção de sua saúde biopsicosocial.

**Descriptores:** Enfermagem Psiquiátrica; Saúde Mental; Enfermagem Baseada em Evidências; Reforma dos Serviços de Saúde; Cuidados de Enfermagem.



## Introduction

The Psychiatric Reform began in the late 1970s, with the intention of ending the asylum approach for individuals in psychological distress, guaranteeing their citizenship, respect for their rights and duties as a citizen and social inclusion. Among the proposed changes were the reformulation of the care model and the humanization of patient care<sup>1</sup>.

The term "Mental Health" was used due to the need to differentiate the criteria of the area, which in Psychiatry had its central focus on the disease. It is defined as an area of knowledge that, in addition to diagnosing and treating, includes prevention and health promotion, focusing on rehabilitating and reincluding the individual in psychological distress in their social context. Therefore, all knowledge linked to Psychiatry remains an essential part of this field of study, but it integrates with other areas to form a more comprehensive knowledge that contemplates all the complexity of this form of human suffering<sup>2</sup>.

Based on the premise that the individual in psychological distress may require continuous attention in his treatment, the nursing team becomes a key element to provide adequate assistance to this patient. Nursing is responsible for supervising and assisting the patient 24 hours a day, ensuring their health and safety<sup>3</sup>. The nursing team is often the one who has more time in contact with the inpatient in their daily lives, which within the psychiatric reality in a scenario of changes implemented by the Reformation, means a greater need to update and humanize their approach and care.

Being considered a science that aims at the implementation of disease treatment and care for the physical and psychosocial well-being of the human being as an individual, family and community, Nursing is performed by nurses, technicians, and nursing assistants. These professionals can work in several areas, both clinical and not, performing actions of planning, coordination, supervision and assistance<sup>3</sup>. Nursing builds its knowledge and shares the successes and frustrations of working in Mental Health with all other areas involved<sup>4</sup>.

Based on the list of hospitals specializing in Psychiatry made available in the 12th edition of the Mental Health in Data newsletter<sup>5</sup>, of October 2015, it was found that Brazil had a total of 167 psychiatric hospitals in that period, being distributed in 116 municipalities by 23 states in the country. However, in a data survey carried out in the National Register of Health Facilities (CNES)<sup>6</sup>, in May 2020, using filters for specialized hospitals in each state, it was found that many establishments do not have their data registered in the system, with only 42 establishments of this type being found. In these places, an average of 4,703 nursing professionals would be active, including 842 nurses, 2,062 nursing technicians and 1,799 nursing assistants. It was possible to verify that these establishments provide services in Mental Health of spontaneous and referenced demand, of the Outpatient, Emergency, Hospitalization, Regulation and Therapeutic Diagnostic Support Service (SADT) types).

Even though they play such a crucial role in care, nursing professionals still need to deal with professional devaluation, which encompasses high workloads as well as low pay. Associated with the great psychological demand that mental health care imposes, this reality can lead to an increase in the rate of mental disorders such as stress, anxiety, and depression in these professionals<sup>7</sup>.

The idea for this work came from the experiences lived by the authors in the field during an extracurricular internship and in the disciplines "Mental and Psychiatric Health" and "Advanced Seminars in Social Care, Citizenship, Mental Health and Quality of Life", in expository and dialogued classes, where the role of the Nursing team was shown to be of significant relevance for mental health care. The knowledge obtained in the field and in the classroom made evident the importance of this professional for the rehabilitation and reinsertion of the individual in psychological distress. The diversity in Mental Health Nursing assistance raised doubts about the impact of the Psychiatric Reform and its consequent challenges and aroused the authors' interest in expanding the knowledge about this insertion and performance of the nursing team in the various devices, where it has an important role assistance to the individual.

The theme is relevant for making public the challenges and achievements of the profession, serving as a support to attend the view of different intervention sectors to improve the working conditions of the professionals who exercise it. The nursing team is immersed in excessive work overload, which can directly reflect on their physical and mental health. The rates of mental disorders and psychoactive substances derived from work are on the rise, given current significant socioeconomic issues<sup>8</sup>.

Thus, this study aims to empower and make visible such professional class, stimulating productions based on nursing scientific evidence, as well as clarifying the conflicts and challenges of its exercise. With this, the authors also seek to assist teaching for the training of new professionals who can recognize the complexity surrounding their work, so that they can exercise it in an ethical and integrated manner in the area's needs.

The purpose of this article is to identify, in the scientific literature, how assistance is provided by the Mental Health Nursing professional and its challenges; and analyze the impacts of the Psychiatric Reform on the assistance of the Nursing professional.

## Methodology

It is an integrative literature review. The method proposes the extraction and analysis of studies in an explanatory way, to contribute to the construction of knowledge about the theme<sup>9</sup>. For the construction of the integrative review, it is necessary to go through six distinct stages, namely the identification of the theme and selection of the research question; establishment of criteria for inclusion and exclusion of studies / sampling and literature search; categorization of studies; evaluation of included



studies; interpretation of results; and presentation of the knowledge review / synthesis<sup>10</sup>.

In the identification of the theme and selection of the research question, to direct this review and achieve the proposed objectives, the following question was formulated: "How does nursing care in mental health occur in the face of the challenges imposed by the Psychiatric Reform in Brazil?".

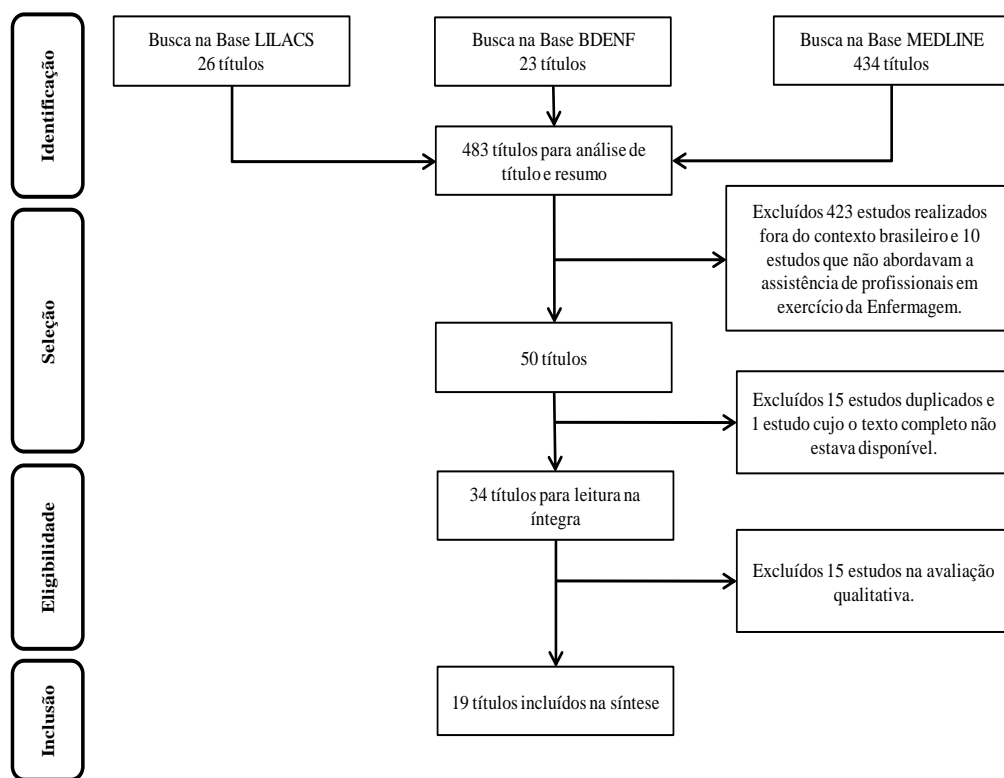
The data collection took place in the period of May 2020 and was carried out through the internet, in the following bases: Online System of Search and Analysis of Medical Literature (MEDLINE), consulted via PubMed; Latin American and Caribbean Literature in Health Sciences (LILACS) and Nursing Database (BDENF), consulted via the Regional Portal of the Virtual Health Library (VHL).

The following search strategies were used to search the VHL and PubMed portals, respectively: Psychiatric Nursing AND (Mental Health OR "Mental Hygiene" OR "Mental Health Area") OR Psiquiatr\$ AND (Nursing Care OR "Nursing Care" Nursing "OR" Nursing Care "OR" Nursing Care ") OR History of Nursing AND (Health Services Reform OR" Health Sector Reform "OR" Health Services Reorientation "); (Psychiatric Nursing OR "Mental Health Nursing" OR

"Nursing, Mental Health" OR "Nursing, Psychiatric" OR "Psychosocial Nursing" OR "Nursing, Psychosocial") AND (Mental Health OR "Health, Mental" OR "Mental Hygiene" OR "Hygiene, Mental") OR (Psychiatry OR "Psychiatrists" OR "Psychiatrist") AND (Nursing Care OR "Care, Nursing" OR "Management, Nursing Care" OR "Nursing Care Management") OR (History of Nursing OR "Nursing History "OR" Nursing, History "OR" History Nursing ") AND (Health Care Reform OR" Health Care Reforms "OR" Reform, Health Care "OR" Reforms, Health Care "OR" Healthcare Reform "OR" Healthcare Reforms "OR "Reform, Healthcare" OR "Reforms, Healthcare").

For the elaboration of search strategies, the following items were used in the term relationships: the quotation marks (") to indicate compound terms; parentheses (()) to establish the order of the search process and separate sets of terms; the Boolean and / or search operators "AND", for the intersection of terms, and "OR", for the union of compound terms and grouping of synonyms. Subsequently, to refine the search, the search filters were used in the VHL portal: "full text - available"; "Main subject - Psychiatric Nursing".

Figure 1. Flowchart of the integrative review of scientific production on nursing care in mental health in Brazil. Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil, 2020



In the establishment of criteria for inclusion and exclusion of studies / sampling and literature search, the following inclusion criteria were defined: texts in Portuguese, English, or Spanish, from original studies, in the format of articles, developed in the Brazilian context, independently the year of publication, which met the criteria of relevance to the theme and approach of the assistance of professionals in nursing practice. Nursing professionals,

assistants, midwives, and nurses are defined as professionals in nursing practice, established in a resolution of the Federal Nursing Council, by Resolution No. 564/2017<sup>3</sup>. The exclusion criteria were duplicate articles, articles that did not meet the criteria of relevance to the theme and approach to the assistance of professionals in nursing practice, and those whose full text was not available on the online platforms. Initially, the titles and detailed summaries of the selected

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and effective contribution to the construction of the review.  
At the end of the qualitative assessment, 15 studies were  
excluded, resulting in a total of 19 studies included in the  
knowledge synthesis (Figure 1).

For data disposal, a data collection chart was used and,  
subsequently, the review was presented with the synthesis  
of the knowledge acquired.

## Results

In the present integrative review, 19 studies were  
selected that met the inclusion criteria, as presented. The  
selected studies were arranged in the following table,  
consisting of title, authors, year of publication and objective,  
for a better understanding of the integrative review (Chart  
1).

publications were read, with the aim of refining the sample  
according to the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Data collection allowed the identification of 483  
studies, of which 23 in the BDEF database, 26 in the LILACS  
database and 434 in the MEDLINE database. The studies  
were categorized through analysis by title and summary,  
where 423 studies carried out outside the Brazilian context  
and 10 studies that did not address the assistance of  
professionals in nursing practice were excluded from the  
sample. Then, 15 duplicate studies and 1 study whose full  
text was not available were excluded, resulting in a total of  
34 studies for qualitative assessment.

In the evaluation of the included studies, the  
selected titles were carefully analyzed by the authors, by  
reading the text in full, where they defined its relevance to  
the composition of the study, its affirmation with the theme

**Chart 1.** Identification of the study sample, according to alphanumeric sequence, title, authors, and objective. Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil, 2020

Title	Authors	Year	Objectives
O conhecimento e a percepção do Enfermeiro a respeito do processo de Reforma Psiquiátrica	Castro, R.C.B.R.; Silva, M.J.	2002	To verify the nurses' knowledge about the psychiatric reform process and their perception of the influence of the process in their daily practice.
Saúde Mental: reconstruindo saberes em enfermagem	Oliveira, Francisca Bezerra de; Fortunado, Maria Lucinete	2003	Interpret the institutionalization of asylum, psychiatry, mental illness and the psychiatric reform process, seeking to contribute to reflections about deinstitutionalization and the knowledge and practices of nursing in mental health.
O trabalho de enfermagem em saúde mental: condições e potencialidades atuais	Oliveira AGB, Alessi NP	2003	To identify contradictions and challenges that are currently present in mental health nursing work, in the context of Psychiatric Reform, having as reference the historical and social construction of this work process.
A prática de enfermagem psiquiátrica em uma instituição pública no Brasil	Lima Lúcia Vaz de; Amorim, Wellington Mendonça de	2003	Identify the characteristics and analyze the changes in nursing practice in the Psychiatric Reform process, from the perspective of the professionals who worked in it in a Public Psychiatric Institution in Rio de Janeiro.
O enfermeiro na equipe de saúde mental - o caso dos CERSAMS de Belo Horizonte	Silveira, Marília Rezende da; Alves, Marília	2003	Describe the activities of nurses in the CERSAMS teams of the Municipal Health Secretariat of Belo Horizonte, MG, focusing on the care and follow-up of mental patients.
Unidades de internação psiquiátrica em hospital geral: Espaço de cuidados e a atuação de equipes de enfermagem	Machado, Ana Lúcia; Colvero, Luciana de Almeida	2003	The aim of this article is to describe experiences of setting up psychiatric wards in a general hospital, with a view to the social inclusion of the mentally ill.
A enfermagem e o cuidar na área de saúde mental	Villela, Sueli de Carvalho; Scatena, Maria Cecília Moraes	2004	Analyze the process of nursing care for the mentally ill in services outside the hospital.



A Saúde Mental no PSF e o trabalho de enfermagem	Silva ATMC, Silva CC, Ferreira Filha MO, Nóbrega MML, Barros S, Santos MKG	2005	Research with the purpose of understanding the limits / possibilities of implementing mental health actions in the services of the basic health network in the city of Cabedelo - PB, in the perspective of the Psychiatric Reform proposed in the country.
Processo de trabalho em saúde mental e o campo psicossocial	Silva, Ana Luisa Aranha e; Fonseca, Rosa Maria Godoy Serpa da	2005	Offer theoretical-conceptual content to guide the reflexive action of mental health workers and nursing.
O trabalho do profissional de nível médio de enfermagem nos novos dispositivos de atenção em saúde mental	Zerbetto, Sonia Regina; Pereira, Maria Alice Ornellas	2005	Reflect on their work, considering the psychosocial model and their assistance intervention actions, based on the theoretical framework of light technologies.
Internação psiquiátrica involuntária: implicações para a relação enfermagem/paciente	Moreira, Lilian Hortale de Oliveira; Loyola, Cristina Maria Douat	2010	List the nursing care provided to the psychiatric patient, considering the type of hospitalization; analyze the reaction of the nursing staff in relation to the Involuntary Psychiatric Hospitalization (IPI) patient, and discuss the implications of the IPI for the psychiatric nursing clinic.
A inserção e as práticas do enfermeiro no contexto dos Centros de Atenção Psicossocial em Álcool e Drogas (CAPS AD) da cidade de São Paulo, Brasil	Vargas, Divane de Vargas; Oliveira, Marcia Aparecida Ferreira de; Duarte, Fernando Augusto Bicudo	2011	Identify the insertion and practices of nurses in the Psychosocial Care Centers for alcohol and drugs in the city of São Paulo.
Dificuldades enfrentadas pela família no acolhimento do paciente com transtorno mental após a alta hospitalar	Oliveira, Elias Barbosa de; Mendonça, Jovana Lucia Schettini	2011	To analyze the difficulties faced by the family in welcoming patients with mental disorders after hospital discharge. Descriptive qualitative study.
Enfermagem psiquiátrica/saúde mental nos congressos brasileiros de enfermagem de 1981 a 1990	Domingues, Priscila Silva; Silva Júnior, Osni Claudiano da	2012	Describe the context of the implementation of the Psychiatric Reform in Brazil from 1981 to 1990; identify the discussions on Psychiatric Nursing / Mental Health in the Brazilian Nursing Congresses and analyze the themes on Psychiatry / Mental Health discussed by Nursing.
Reforma psiquiátrica em Natal-RN: evolução histórica e os desafios da assistência de enfermagem	Silva, Fernando de Souza; Simpson, Clélia Albino; Dantas, Rita de Cássia	2014	Discuss the evolution of care practices for patients with psychiatric disorders in the city of Natal (RN).
Saberes e práticas de enfermeiros na saúde mental: desafios diante da Reforma Psiquiátrica	Souza, M. C; Miranda, M. L.	2015	Considering the importance of the nursing professional in the implementation of this policy, a research was developed on the knowledge and practices of nurses in the mental health area.
Compreensão de enfermeiras atuantes em saúde mental sobre a internação compulsória e involuntária	Xavier MS, Terra MG, Schimith MD, Leite MT, Kruse MHL, Arnemann CT	2017	To analyze the understanding of nurses working in mental health services about compulsory and involuntary hospitalizations referred to in the Brazilian Psychiatric Reform Law.
Eletroconvulsoterapia: construção histórica do cuidado de enfermagem (1989-2002)	Guimarães, Juliana Cabral da Silva; Santos, Bárbara Lima dos; Aperibense, Pacita Geovana Gama de Souza; Martins, Gizele da Conceição Soares; Peres,	2018	Describe the nursing care provided by the nursing team to the person with a mental disorder submitted to ECT and analyze the implications of the Psychiatric Reform in this care.





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Santos, Tania Cristina Franco

O Trabalho Multiprofissional nos Centros de Atenção Psicossocial de São Paulo Jafelice, Giovana Telles; Marcolan, João Fernando

2018 Analyze how professionals understood multi, inter and transprofessionality and how these practices occurred in CAPS (Psychosocial Care Centers) in São Paulo / SP.

About the 19 articles selected to compose the present study, they were published in nine different journals, among which we highlight the Brazilian Journal of Nursing and the Latin American Journal of Nursing, which each collaborated with six studies (31.58%). The Acta Paulista de Enfermagem magazines, Anna Nery School Revista de Enfermagem, Interinstitutional Journal of Psychology, Research Magazine: Care is Fundamental Online, Electronic Magazine Mental Health Alcohol and Drugs, UERJ Nursing Magazine and Revista da Escola de Enfermagem da USP each collaborated. with one study (5.26%).

The articles were published between 2002 and 2018, with the following time frame: five studies (26.32%) published in 2003; three studies (15.79%) published in 2005; two studies (10.53%) published in 2011; two studies (10.53%) published in 2018; one study (5.26%) published, per year, in 2002, 2004, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2015 and 2017.

As for the authorship of the selected articles, they were published by professionals in the fields of Nursing, History, Psychology and Sociology, with 28 nurses (87.5%), two psychologists (6.3%), a historian (3.1%) and a sociologist (3.1%).

Regarding the region where the research was carried out, the studies were developed in the Southeast region, totaling nine studies (47.37%), of which four were carried out in Rio de Janeiro, and there were seven studies (36.84%) that considered Brazil as a unit of analysis. The Northeast region contributed with two studies (10.53%), and the South region contributed with one study (5.26%).

When analyzing the methodology, 10 exploratory research (52.63%), eight bibliographic research (42.11%), and one documentary research (5.26%) were identified.

The analysis of the data extracted from the articles selected in the search gave rise to two thematic categories, which are: 1. The Brazilian Psychiatric Reform and its implications for nursing practices; 2. Nursing care in Mental Health services and its challenges. Category number 2 was divided into two subcategories to facilitate the approach of the theme, being: 2.1. Assistance in psychiatric inpatient units; 2.2. Assistance in extra-hospital services.

## Discussion

### The Brazilian Psychiatric Reform and its implications for nursing practices

At the end of the 18th century, the assistance provided by Nursing was based on the perspective of Pinel's moral treatment and Kraepelin's descriptive Psychiatry, and its function was to assist the doctor, ensure hygiene

conditions and employ hydrotherapeutic measures. The perception of patients was like that of common sense at the time, they were threatening and subject to seclusion<sup>11</sup>. Assistance to these individuals was carried out mainly through somatic intervention treatments such as hypnotherapy, insulin shock, Metrazol shock, psychosurgery, electroconvulsive therapy and, later, psychotropic drugs<sup>12</sup>.

The process of changes in the model of psychiatry in Brazil began in the late 1970s, consisting of the struggle to defend the improvement in the quality of mental health care, aiming at transforming the current hospital-centered asylum model. This sociopolitical movement emerged in a period of profound political changes that led to the country's redemocratization after the decadence of the military regime, and it acted harmoniously to the sanitary movement in the desire to reshape the relations of health service users with care providers, having the influence of the deinstitutionalization discourses that occurred in several countries in Europe and in the United States<sup>13</sup>.

The 8th National Health Conference (CNS), held in 1986, had a fundamental role in defining the doctrinal principles of the 1988 Constitution, which brings as one of its principles the effective participation of the population in the management of health resources. With this change in the way of thinking about public health policies, we begin to debate the standards of care in psychiatric institutions, seeking to distance themselves from the past model, which was based on violence and abandonment, in addition to the institutionalization and abusive use of medicines in the treatment. This process is called Psychiatric Reform<sup>11</sup>.

The Psychiatric Reform marked the national context. The breaking of a hegemonic, hospital-centered and medicalizing care model reaffirmed the struggle for equity in the context of mental health, as well as social inclusion and deinstitutionalization of people in psychological distress<sup>14</sup>.

The new context structurally reinvented what used to be large psychiatric hospitals, with the creation of substitute services for the asylum model. The outpatient clinic starts to attend the first crises and situations of greater vulnerability, avoiding rehospitalizations and psychiatric hospitalizations<sup>15</sup>. In the wards of psychiatric institutions, adopted as a last resort, a more bureaucratic role is seen, with resoluteness and bonding with other professionals and family members<sup>16</sup>. The community care profile gains prominence, through the Psychosocial Care Centers (CAPS) and the very insertion of mental health teams in Primary Care, through the Family Health Strategy (FHS)<sup>17</sup>. In these spaces, other therapeutic options are added, such as community therapy, which aims to share experiences



between service users, identify frustrations, in addition to a greater bond with the professional<sup>18</sup>.

Despite the reformist ideals being reflected in the most diverse spheres, it is in assistance that its implications are most perceived. The nursing professional, in the conception of Psychiatric Reform as a movement, had a significant increase in its importance for the new approach to mental health, in which the philosophy of humanization can contribute to an effective and resolute nursing care. It is necessary to be open to criticism to carry out teamwork with balance and commitment to the redefinition of policies to assist individuals with mental disorders<sup>19</sup>.

Some authors corroborate this statement<sup>13-20</sup> when they bring in their studies the statement of nursing professionals working in mental health regarding the importance of offering care in addition to medicines and hygiene<sup>13</sup>.

In a survey carried out in the mental health services of a city in the interior of the state of Rio Grande do Sul<sup>20</sup>, nursing professionals affirmed the need for an empathetic approach to care for individuals in psychological distress and the understanding that care must be a dynamic, changeable, and innovative process, constantly being developed and improved through dialogue and observation of the patient as the be holistic that is.

For some authors<sup>18,21,22</sup>, there are still challenges for expanding the intervention object proposed by the Psychiatric Reform in nursing care. A review of the contradictions and challenges currently present in mental health nursing work<sup>21</sup>, points out that nursing professionals still demonstrate resistance in developing their practice along the lines of the Psychiatric Reform, presenting difficulty in being responsible for patient care. These professionals use as argument various discontent, such as the lack of autonomy, the submission of nursing work to medical work and the lack of recognition and end up settling in this situation and failing to participate in treatment decisions and even those related to the nursing actions themselves.

In practice, the lack of recognition of the profession permeates the various fields of activity. Such a process is historical, since it associates the profession with charity, given that it began in religious institutions; in addition to its exercise being mostly female, thus encompassing discriminatory gender issues<sup>22</sup>.

Still, according to a survey on the reorientation of the mental health care model<sup>18</sup>, there are also conditions that challenge the implementation of measures in line with Psychiatric Reform. Among them are precarious working conditions, slowness in financing substitutive actions in mental health, a demeaning salary and the immense effort required to implement a mental health project aimed at the citizen.

### Nursing care in Mental Health services and its challenges

The restructuring of mental health services promoted by the Psychiatric Reform led to the creation of extra-hospital substitute services and the reformulation of

care practices applied in nursing homes, aiming at the progressive extinction of asylums<sup>23</sup>. The mental health care network is now comprised of CAPS, Residential Therapeutic Services (SRT), Community Centers, Mental Health Outpatient Centers and Psychiatric and General Hospitals<sup>14</sup>.

### Assistance in psychiatric inpatient units

Studies point out<sup>24</sup> that the overcoming of the old models of assistance was essential for the construction of new intervention proposals. Some authors claim that the training of nursing professionals involved in this process influenced their conceptions and practices, enabling new perspectives that favored the construction of a differentiated practice in relation to mental health. The professionals started to bring in their speeches the importance of interdisciplinary action and the concept of the patient as a singular being, with autonomy and an integral part of a social network.

In a survey conducted with nursing professionals at four Mental Health Reference Centers (CERSAM) in the public service network in Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais<sup>25</sup>, it is reported that the standard of care for inpatients seeks progression to outpatient treatment. The consent and participation of the patient and his family is considered an appropriate option and accepted by nursing professionals, who also express the importance of their insertion in interdisciplinary care, so that there is the experience of an innovative and integral work, contributing to the improvement of the attendance.

Psychiatric units in a general hospital also contribute to the establishment of a new relationship of tolerance with the hospitalized patient, inserting him in a treatment space, later occupied only by the other subjects affected by clinical pathologies. In addition, nursing care based on subjective care and in conjunction with other health knowledge that is not restricted to a single field allows the patient to have his needs fully met<sup>26</sup>.

However, some studies<sup>27-29</sup> emphasize that the psychiatric hospital environment presents obstacles that make the practice of psychiatric nursing arduous, considering the daily experience with mental disorder. The unhealthy environment can prove to be a complicating factor in the exercise of mental health nursing, since this environment can end up generating anguish, suffering and malaise due to the situations of segregation and degradation that can occur in it<sup>27</sup>.

Coping with suffering is sometimes challenging, placing the professional in a vulnerable situation. In addition, there is a certain physical vulnerability, given the unhealthy working conditions often established, as well as the lack of protection in cases of pathological aggression, since the nurse is the front line in responding to the crisis. Mental health nursing assistance, especially in an inpatient unit, faces challenges inherent to the area itself, demanding from these professionals a high level of improvisation, aggravated and revealed by the lack of adequate conditions for daily work<sup>28</sup>.



It is also important to highlight the professional's discontent with the norms of the institution where he works and even the Psychiatric Reform itself, which can become the cause of a feeling of helplessness, as they are often imposed vertically<sup>29</sup>.

### Assistance in extra-hospital services

In extra-hospital auxiliary services, assistance has an approach primarily focused on the development of user autonomy and their reintegration into society. In this context, the professional needs to go through a process of deinstitutionalization, where he must review his postures and his theoretical and practical knowledge that maintain the social exclusion of the user. The emphasis on social relations and the search for the rupture of mechanisms that perpetuate the marginalization of individuals is fundamental<sup>30</sup>.

The CAPS occupy a strategic position in the articulation of the mental health care network in the territory, promoting autonomy, since it articulates the existing resources in various networks: socio-sanitary, legal, social, and educational, among others<sup>14</sup>.

The assistance of nursing professionals in the context of CAPS occurs in several ways, such as in therapeutic groups, workshops, and team meetings, with group activities being their most effective insertion. Welcoming, especially in the user's first contact with the service, guarantees the professional the possibility of proposing and coordinating the user's therapeutic project, becoming a reference within CAPS. The integration of the nursing professional with the multidisciplinary team, in this service, is facilitated by the flexibility in the division of labor among professionals, different from the characteristic of the hospital model, where the work relationships are hierarchically vertically<sup>31</sup>.

However, a survey carried out with nursing professionals at nine CAPS in the capital of São Paulo concluded that, although the proposals for disciplinary integration are valued in the speeches of the interviewees and in the literature, this concept is little problematized as the production of democracy and the horizontality of relationships. The prevalence of auxiliary interdisciplinarity and the disagreements experienced by professionals are perceived between what they consider specific to their training, or even what is recommended by professional councils, and the proposals for disciplinary integration<sup>32</sup>.

Some authors<sup>30</sup> they also highlight the importance of the training process for these professionals to have a new perspective, drawing the attention of nurse-teachers regarding the change in the conception of the mental health "object" and the need to reframe the way of working in the new psychosocial context. There is a need for knowledge to be articulated and other forms of approach to be exercised, which are not based purely on punishing, monitoring, controlling and disciplining. It is suggested that alternative services, such as CAPS, be spaces for teaching and learning and that the experience lived by the student be problematized and debated, along with the strategies used,

so that it can provide a new relationship between theory and practice, avoiding actions mechanized and alienated and developing a reflective and conscious sense.

### Conclusion

The text met the objective of identifying how nursing care in mental health occurs in the face of the challenges imposed by the Psychiatric Reform in the Brazilian context, expressed in scientific literature. It was noticed that nursing professionals work from extra-hospital services, such as CAPS and in Primary Care, to inpatient institutions, which are specific to mental health and general services. In all places of insertion, their work is carried out in a unique way for each point of attention.

Actions aimed at the humanization and integrality of the patient were reflected in the assistance. Care is not restricted to the subject, so the nursing professional acts in bureaucratic instances and in the management of human resources.

Psychiatric Reform is considered a guiding framework for the reformulation of mental health practices. Its insertion has an impact on teaching, assistance, and scientific production. It is clear in the data of most of the reviewed publications that, the way of understanding the subject has been improved, carrying significant structural and symbolic changes, thus leaving aside the asylum model.

Despite the most diverse competences and opportunities for insertion of such a professional class, the devaluation of their knowledge, the work overload, as well as the stressors in dealing with the patient in psychological vulnerability are still present. Thus, it is necessary to take a more careful look at these professionals who may have their physical and psychological health impaired.

Such study has limitations due to the impossibility of specifically exploring the various regions of Brazil, assuming in itself a generalist view of the country as a whole, disregarding possible particularities and discrepancies that occur in its territory. It was also limited to excluding some psychiatric hospitals and CAPS due to the lack of data on these establishments at CNES, making it impossible to account for the total number of professionals working in these locations, and excluding studies that were not available on the Internet in full text.

The study enriched the knowledge of its authors, giving voice to a profession of such importance in the area of health. Through this, it is noteworthy that, despite the satisfactory nature that can result from such an exercise, there is still much to evolve, mainly in issues related to empowerment and to make use of the intrinsic scientific technical knowledge in each professional carried in his long years of studies.

Finally, we emphasize the need for more and more productions based on nursing scientific evidence and recommend further research that can present the reality of daily nursing practice in the context of mental health, clarifying the conflicts and challenges of its exercise, as well as the production of texts as an experience report. With this, the importance of this profession becomes public and the





look of different sectors of intervention is attentive to the improvement of working conditions, the valorization of the knowledge of the nursing professional and the political

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