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## The Care Situation, Stigmatization and Requirements of People with Mental Health Problems in Rural Areas

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### ABSTRACT

With a lifetime prevalence of about 27 % mental disorders are amongst the most common diseases. They typically are of chronic course, thus affecting not only the respective people, but also the social surroundings. In order to provide mental health care in best possible proximity to their homes, transparency of the services offered and a rapid access are needed. The present study aims at defining the problems and requirements of rural mental health in a Carinthian region (Austria). The users (n = 46) and the family members (n = 37) were surveyed regarding their individual situation, the current strains and the level of social support. Additionally, expert interviews (n = 44) were conducted and analysed by using qualitative content analysis. Findings revealed that much of mental health care is delivered by primary care physicians and is too often limited to medication. As far as mobile psychosocial offers and expert staff are concerned, all of our interviewed people locate serious flaws and need for action. The present study concludes that there is urgent need to improve the care situation in rural areas. Case and care management and initiatives to reduce stigmatization are of paramount importance.

### KEYWORDS

Mental Illness; Community-Based Mental Health Services; Unmet Medical Need; Stigmatization

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