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## Professional activation and rehabilitation program for people with mental disorders

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**Introduction:** For people with mental disabilities, work has an autotelic value, providing a primary purpose and meaning of existence. Work removes from them the stigma of being redundant, unnecessary and less valuable in their social and family environment. Work provides people with disabilities with a sense of involvement in the creation and multiplication of goods necessary to society to which they belong. For many people with disabilities work is also therapeutic or psychotherapeutic. The programme of supported employment (Program Pracy Wspieranej) aims to restore the possibility of effective participation in social, professional and personal life to people with an experience of mental disorders, and to prepare these people to work on the open labor market.

**Material & Methods:** The data on the programme was obtained from analysis of the documentation. In 2014, 14 people with mental disorders aged 23 to 64 years old took up supported employment via the programme as waiter, receptionist, and hygiene operative.

**Results:** In 2014, 3 participants had completed the programme, of which 2 persons were employed in the Department of Professional Activation. The documentation of the programme dating back to 2004 demonstrates that taking part in the program was associated with reductions in hospitalizations in full-time and day wards and better functioning in the social and family environment.

**Conclusions:** Taking up of economic activity by persons with mental illness brings socio-economic benefits (reduced social maintenance costs), contributes to the healing process of these people, has an impact on the indicators of treatment efficacy (resolution of symptoms, compliance with taking medication, reducing the number of relapses).

### Biography

Paulina Zabielska is an employee working in the Department and Unit of Public Health at Pomeranian Medical University in Szczecin, Poland. She serves as Chairman of the Association of Families and Careers of Mentally Ill people 'The Family'. Her research interests are the issues concerning Public Health and Environmental Medicine.

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