

# MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS - STIGMA - PSYCHOEDUCATION

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# CONFLICT OF INTEREST

## **Speakers Bureau:**

*Janssen, Lundbeck, Servier Pharma, Antibiotice SA, Galenica, Astra Zeneca, Gedeon Richter, Teva*

## **Research / Grants:**

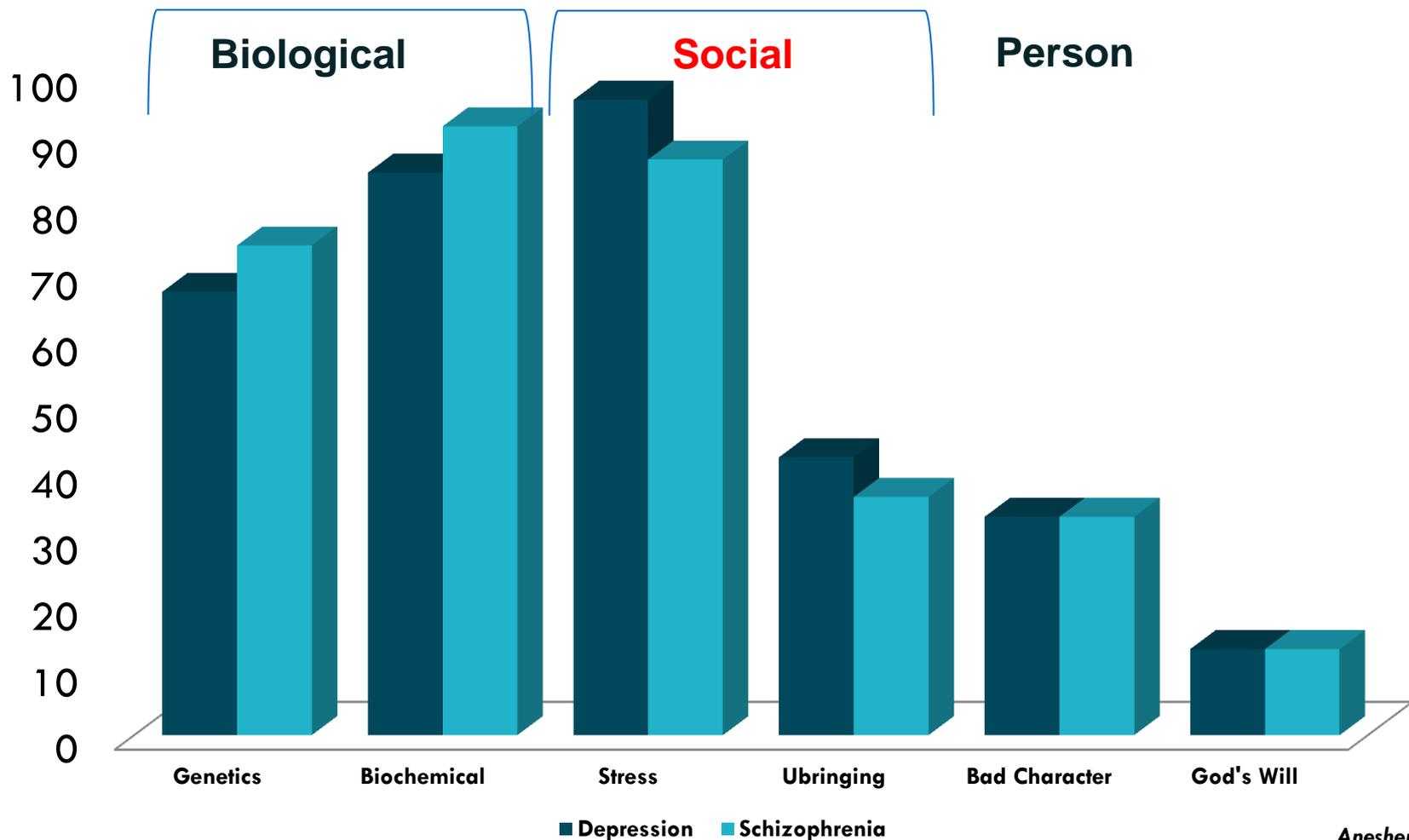
*ROM - CNCIS, ROM - ACAD, EU - POSDRU, USA - NIMH.*

- **PhD in Medical Sciences (Psychiatry), Master in Public Health (Management of Hospitals)**
- **Lecturer – Medical Sociology, UMPH of Craiova**
- **Fogarty Fellowship, University of California, Berkley**
- **Director of Psychological and Pedagogical Training Department, UMPH of Craiova**
- **ESAS, WPA, ARPP, SRPS, MHASEE member**

# Mental Illness Stigma

- Three out of four people with a mental illness report that they have experienced **stigma**.
- **Stigma** is a mark of disgrace that sets a person apart. When a person is labelled by their illness they are seen as part of a stereotyped group.
- **Negative attitudes** create prejudice which leads to negative actions and discrimination.

# Public perceptions of the causes of mental illness



# Mental illness stigma



# Mental illness stigma

- Mental illness remains **profoundly stigmatized** despite numerous initiatives to combat the negative stereotypes (Abbey et al, 2011; Sartorius et al, 2010; Thornicroft et al, 2007; Corrigan & Penn, 1999; Corrigan et al, 2012)
- Stigma can be understood as a **combination of problems** of knowledge (ignorance), attitudes (prejudice) and behavior (discrimination) and has been described as a “primary barrier” to treatment and recovery (Corrigan & Penn, 1999)
- It can be **particularly damaging** when it comes from **medical professionals**, to whom people turn for help, and has well documented detrimental effects on both patient care and physician health (Sartorius et al, 2010; Jorm et al, 1999)

# Mental Illness Stigma... facts

- around **a third** would not vote for a **politician** with depression
- **42%** thought people with depression were **unpredictable**
- **one in 5** said that if they had depression they would **not tell anyone**
- nearly **2 in 3** people surveyed thought people with **schizophrenia** were unpredictable and a quarter felt that they were **dangerous**

# Harmful effects of stigma

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- **Reluctance** to seek help or treatment
- **Lack of understanding** by family, friends, co-workers or others you know
- **Fewer opportunities** for work, school or social activities or trouble finding housing
- Bullying, physical violence or harassment
- Health insurance that doesn't adequately cover your **mental illness treatment**
- The belief that you'll **never be able to succeed** at certain challenges or that you can't improve your situation

# Harmful effects of stigma

- Inhibition of **primary prevention**
- Limitation of **early detection** and of positive treatment outcomes
- Contribution to a **drain on health resources** and on the economy
- An impediment to **recovery**
- Multi-faceted and creates a **multiplier effect** (stigma piled upon stigma).

# Mental Illness Stigma

## Medical Professionals



# Mental Illness Stigma

## Medical Professionals

- **Medical professionals**, especially psychiatrists, contribute to stigma through both the **careless use of diagnostic labels** and through treatments that produce significant side effects.
- **Discriminatory behavior** by doctors can be also involved in the **excessive premature death rate** among people with mental illness (there is a tendency to ignore these patients' general health problems or discount them as being delusional).

# Mental Illness Stigma

## Medical Professionals

- **Reasons for non-referral:** concerns about the effectiveness of psychiatric treatment and stigma for the patient. (Link et al, 1982)
- **28% of medical students** stated that psychiatric patients were “not easy to like.” As graduates and practicing physicians, that figure rose to **56%**. (Bryne, 1999)
- **Medical practitioners** hold a “**range of attitudes** towards individuals with a psychiatric diagnosis similar to those held by the **general public.**” (Gray, 2002)

# Mental Illness Stigma

## Medical Professionals

- **The presence or the mere suspicion** of a mental illness in a patient in a general hospital led to reactions among staff that ranged from silence, disbelief (they are not genuinely ill), to invalidation of the patient's experiences. (Liggins & Hatcher, 2005)
- In the UK, **44% of people** with mental illness reported experiencing stigma from their **primary care physician**, and 32% reported stigma from **other health care professionals**. (Mental Health Foundation. 2000)

# Mental Illness Stigma

## Medical Students



# Mental Illness Stigma

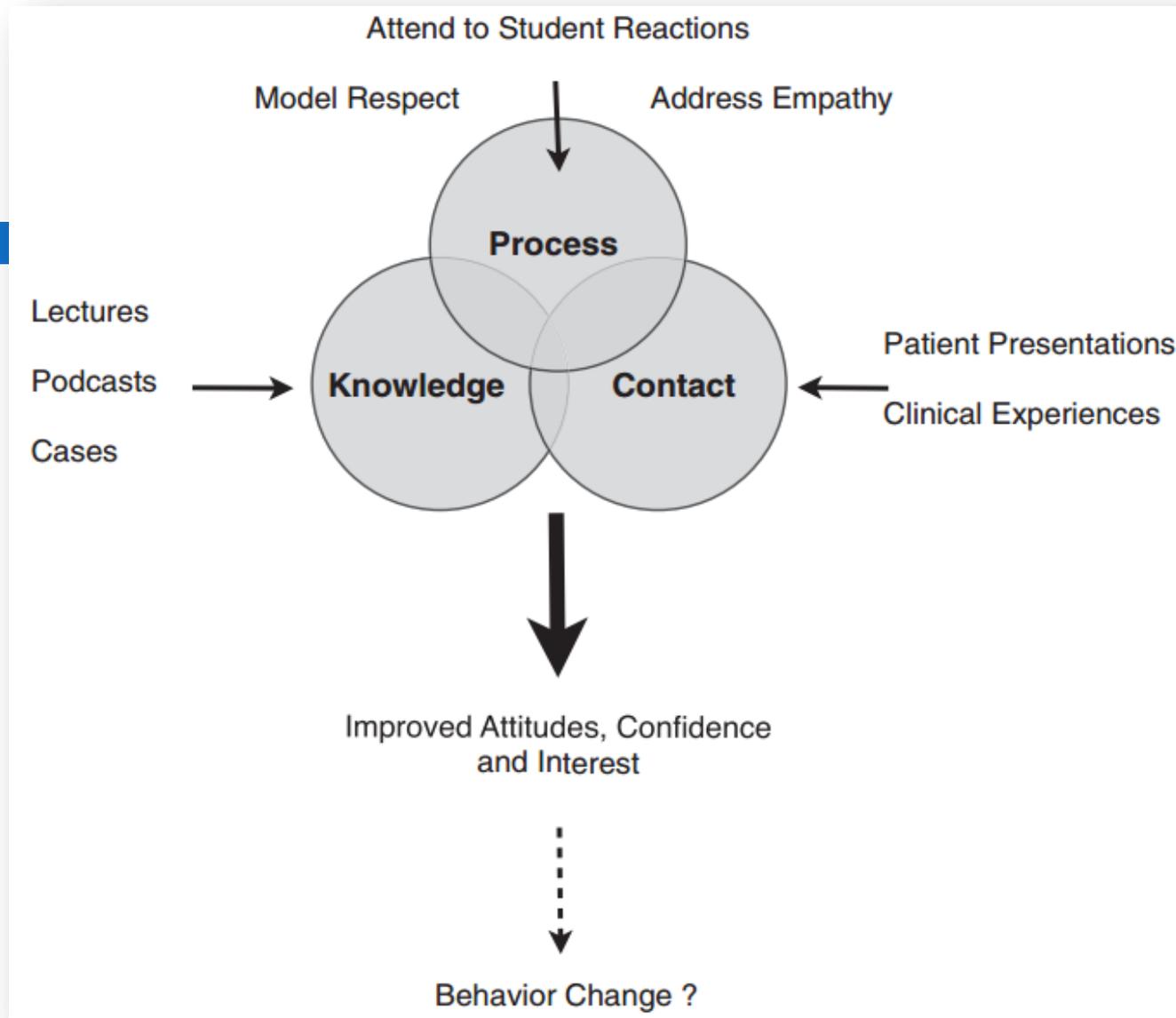
## Medical Students

- For medical students, attitudes **early on in training** tend to be more amenable to change (Nieuwhof et al, 2008)
- Their stigmatizing behavior or attitudes will model for others what physicians consider to be appropriate behavior (Abbey et al, 2001)
- Medical students and physicians are at higher risk of burnout and addictions than others in the general public, and **they are reluctant to seek help** due to the associated stigma (Gautam, 2000; Dyrbye et al, 2008)

# Mental Illness Stigma

## Medical Students

- Stigma contributes to the **shortage to choosing a psychiatric career**, due to perceptions of it being an unrewarding and stressful profession (Schwenk et al, 2010; Cutler et al, 2009)
- This “physician bias” may be due to **psychiatrist’s clinical experiences** of trying to treat those who are most ill, do not recover fully or relapse frequently (Jorm et al, 2009)
- Some **effective methods** to improve medical students attitudes towards mental illness may be a potent way to disrupt the cycle of stigma (Feldman, 2005)



**Model for decreasing stigma and improving medical student attitudes towards mental illness.**

# Mental Illness Stigma

## Mental Health Professionals



# Mental Illness Stigma

## Mental Health Professionals

- Psychiatrists held **more negative attitudes** toward people with mental illness than the general public.
- Mental health professionals of all types are three times more likely to **support restrictions** for people with mental illness than the general public.
- **Better knowledge** of mental illness did not reduce stereotyping nor did it enhance willingness to interact with people with mental illness. (Nordt, Rossler & Lauber, 2006)

# Mental Illness Stigma

## Mental Health Professionals

- Mental health professionals are **less optimistic** about long term outcomes for people with mental illness than the general public. (Hugo, 2001, Mental health literacy in Canada: Phase 1 report, 2007)
- 50% of psychiatrists surveyed by the Michigan Psychiatric Society said that **they would treat themselves in secrecy** rather than have mental illness recorded on their medical chart. (Myers, 2001)

# Reducing Mental Illness Stigma

- **Increase the awareness and knowledge** of the nature of mental illness and treatment options;
- **Improve public attitudes** to those who have or have had mental illness, and their families;
- **Generate action** to prevent or eliminate stigma and discrimination.

# Reducing Mental Illness Stigma

- A **biomedically model** of mental illness does not seem to reduce stigma amongst population, mostly because it creates in the public's mind a perception that mental illness is less under a person's control, that people with mental illness are more unpredictable, more potentially dangerous, more fundamentally different, and less likely to recover (Corrigan and Watson, 2004; Schomerus et al., 2004; Stuart et al., 2012).
- Extending this conclusion to health professionals may be an error, because physicians think about 'the biological' differently than the general public does. (Ungar et al, 2013)

# Reducing Mental Illness Stigma

- Anti-stigma campaigns among medical professionals using the potential of the Internet **might be an effective tool** in the fight against the stigmatization of persons with mental illness. (Reha Bayar et al, 2009)
- There is sufficient evidence that psycho-education interventions **reduce stigmatising attitudes**. (Corrigan, 2012)
- The strongest effect was found for the impact of psycho-education interventions on **personal stigma and the desire for social distance**. (Reavley & Jorm, 2013)



***Thank you!***