

- **THE SITUATION OF NEUROPSYCHIATRIC HOSPITALS OF THE CITY OF BUENOS AIRES**

Buenos Aires, August 21, 2009

Over the last weeks, there have been some events and revolts from different sectors about the critical situation the neuropsychiatric hospitals of the City of Buenos Aires are going through.

Those events occur in a context of a prolonged state of deterioration of Public Health in the City of Buenos Aires, and in other big and important parts of the country, due to the lack of public resources assigned to health and mental health in particular, which makes the working conditions increasingly extreme for psychiatrists and other health professionals and workers, whose efforts are mainly supporting it.

This happens in the midst of great instability and confusion caused by the missing, incomplete or contradictory information issued by the Government of the City of Buenos Aires, which affect workers, patients and their families. We cannot continue operating by “trial and error” in an area as sensitive as that of Health, lurching among real estate speculations, inefficiency, improvisation and insensitivity to the needs of the population.

Once again, we hold that the Government must guarantee worthy, universal and free Public Health, understood as an inalienable right for all inhabitants.

Likewise, it is impossible to ignore in the current context of knowledge that the Mental Health of a population is determined by the conditions of housing, nutrition, work, education, worthy income, justice, freedom and information. Therefore, we consider it is essential to strive for:

1. Defending the Public Hospital as the main resource to provide health services to the population.
2. Proper transformation and no dismantling of neuropsychiatric hospitals in order to advance the reform to psychiatric and Mental Health care.
3. Urgent formulation of a complete and effective Mental Health plan, with the participation of all the sectors involved.
4. Providing senior positions through a transparent selection process, respecting the professionals' powers and obligations.
5. Provision and orientation of the resources, care and treatments provided in the field of mental health which guarantee personal dignity, and human and civil rights for all patients and their families.
6. Developing active sanitary policies in the field of Mental Health on prevention, social reinsertion and rehabilitation.
7. Establishing and respecting healthy working conditions and fair remuneration for all Mental Health professionals.
8. Government provision of adequate budgets for the public institutions in the field of Mental Health

APSA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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