



European standards for the work of the peer support worker

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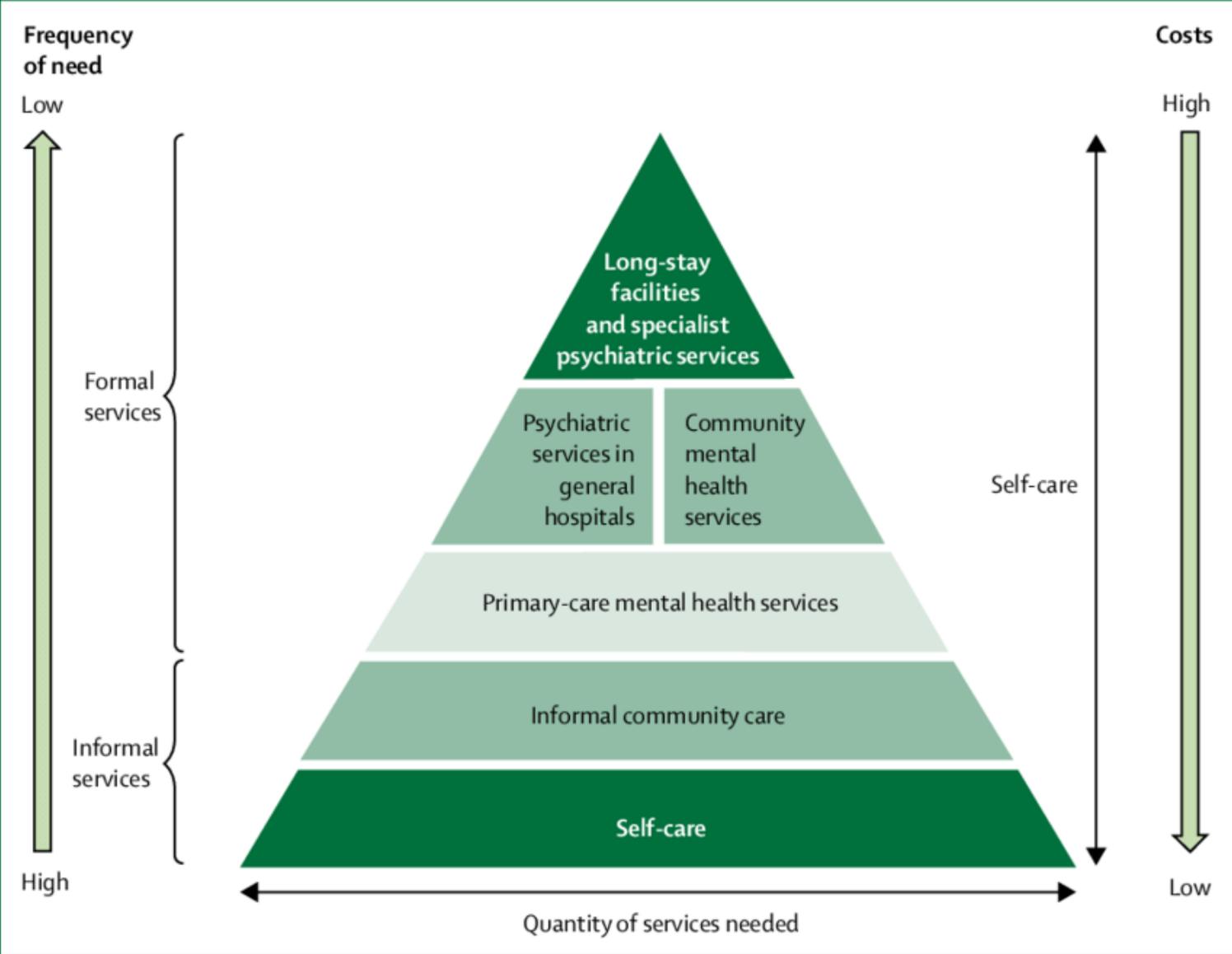
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Introduction

- The IO1 product describes the work standards of convalescence assistants in the European dimension.
- The assumption of the project was to develop these standards in the first place. For this purpose, project partners prepared an analysis of the target group's situation in the partner countries.
- The differences in the criteria for access to the profession, the level of apprenticeship and the formal and legal status of recovery assistants in individual partner countries turned out to be very large. The work of convalescence assistants is the most formalized in the Netherlands and Germany. Also in Poland, they find official employment in Mental Health Centers. In Norway, there are no official admission criteria and in Greece there is no formal definition of peer work.
- The most important criterion for being able to perform the function of a convalescence assistant is, of course, his personal experience and - more or less formalized - substantive preparation, adequate to the education systems in a given country and the qualifications framework.
- All this meant that the standards were created as the last product of our program



*The WHO pyramid for optimal
MIX of mental health services*





Two informal levels

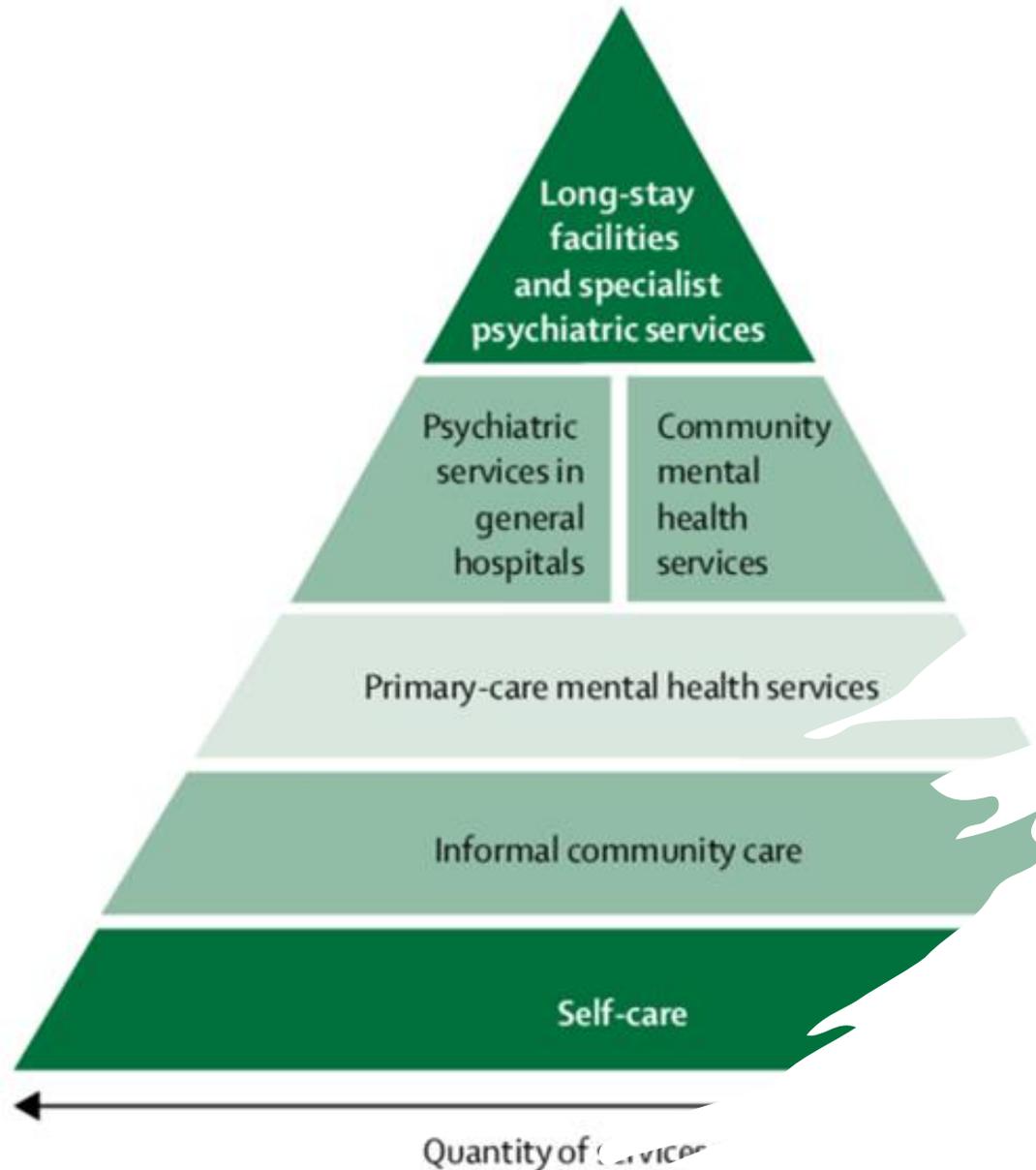
- The first level is self-care, for which awareness and empowerment are of key importance.
- Most people are able to deal with their mental health problems by themselves or with the support of family and friends. The effectiveness of self-care is greatly influenced by formal healthcare support offered to people with disorders and their families.



Two informal levels

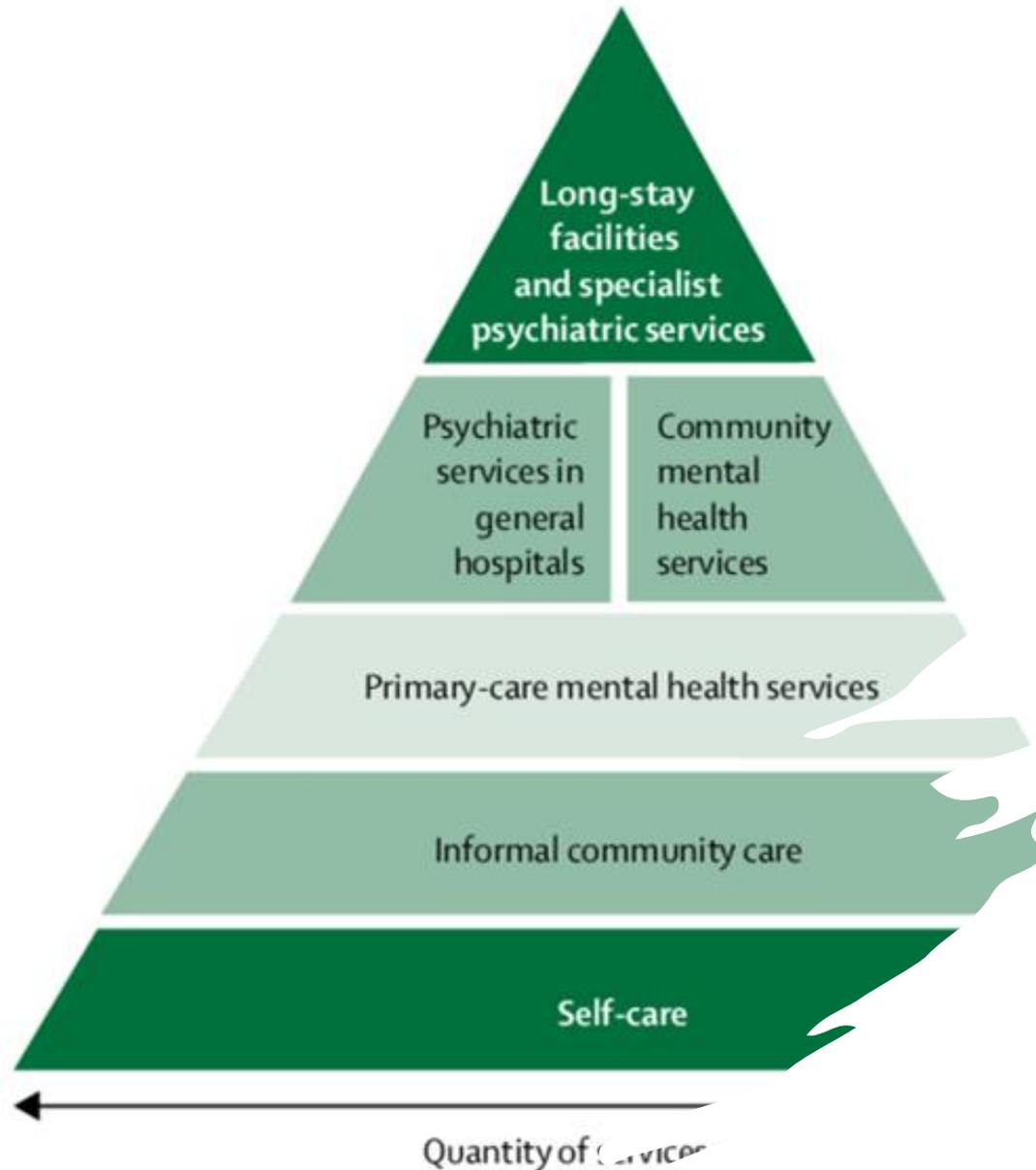
- The second level of informal care involves support services provided by the community, acting either collectively or individually. They can be friends, family, neighbours, religious leaders, social workers, and people with the experience of a mental crisis.

The four levels of the pyramid are forms of formal care.



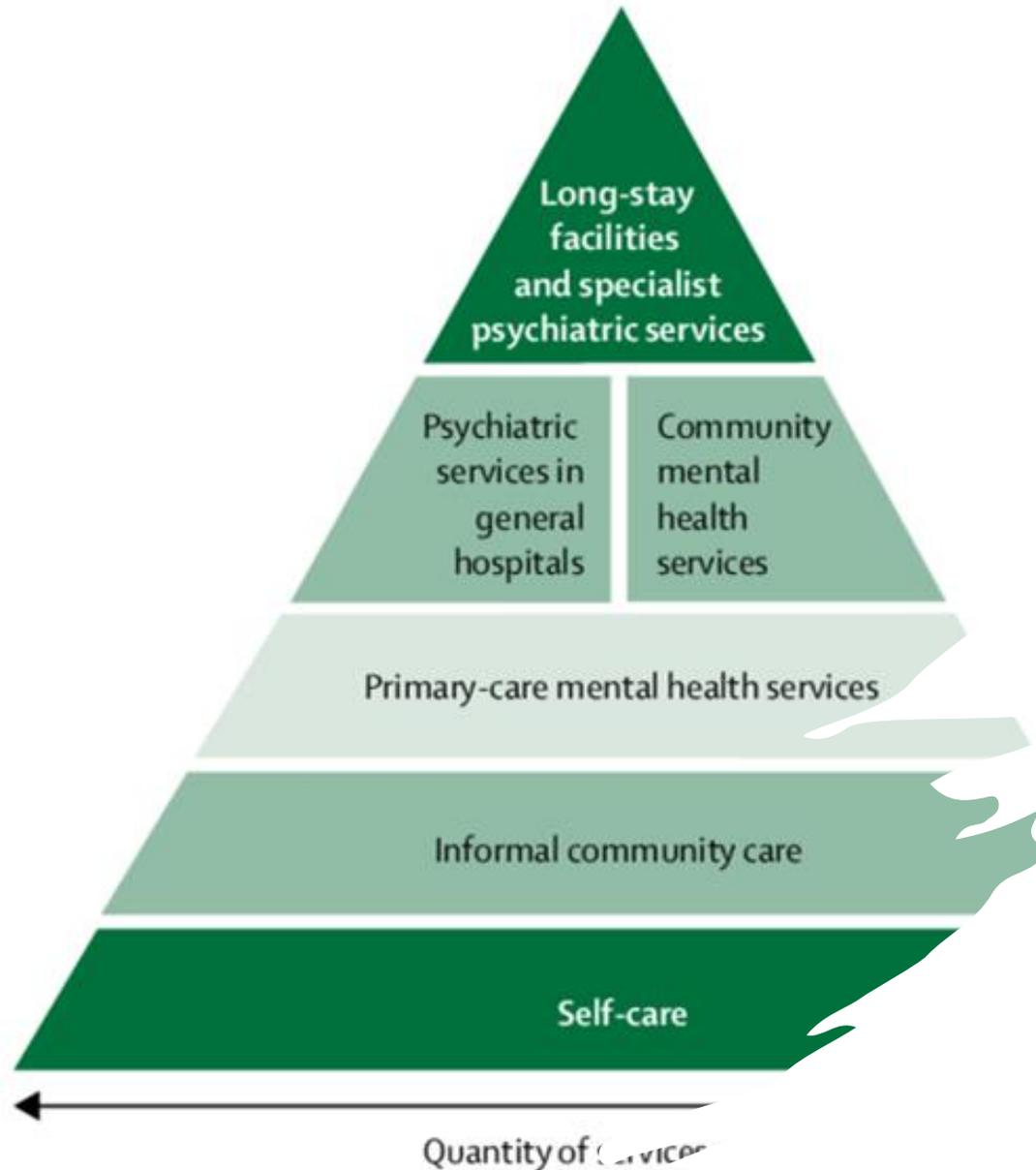
- The first is mental health care provided as part of primary health care. It is the optimal level for ensuring that mental care is offered at a relatively low cost and integrates physical and mental health.
- The fourth level of the pyramid is specialised social services, including community care, day care, long-term care for chronic patients, assistance and family support in finding employment or housing, rehabilitation services, psychiatric wards in general hospitals, services in mental health clinics, mobile crisis teams etc.

The four levels of the pyramid are forms of formal care



- Level 4 of the pyramid also includes services provided to people with mental disorders in general hospitals. For more serious (or recurring) mental problems, a short stay in hospital is often necessary.

The last level



- The last level of psychiatric health care in the WHO pyramid framework is highly specialised psychiatric care, which is required by the fewest number of people, but is the most expensive.
- This small group of patients with mental disorders require specialist care beyond that which can be provided in general hospitals.



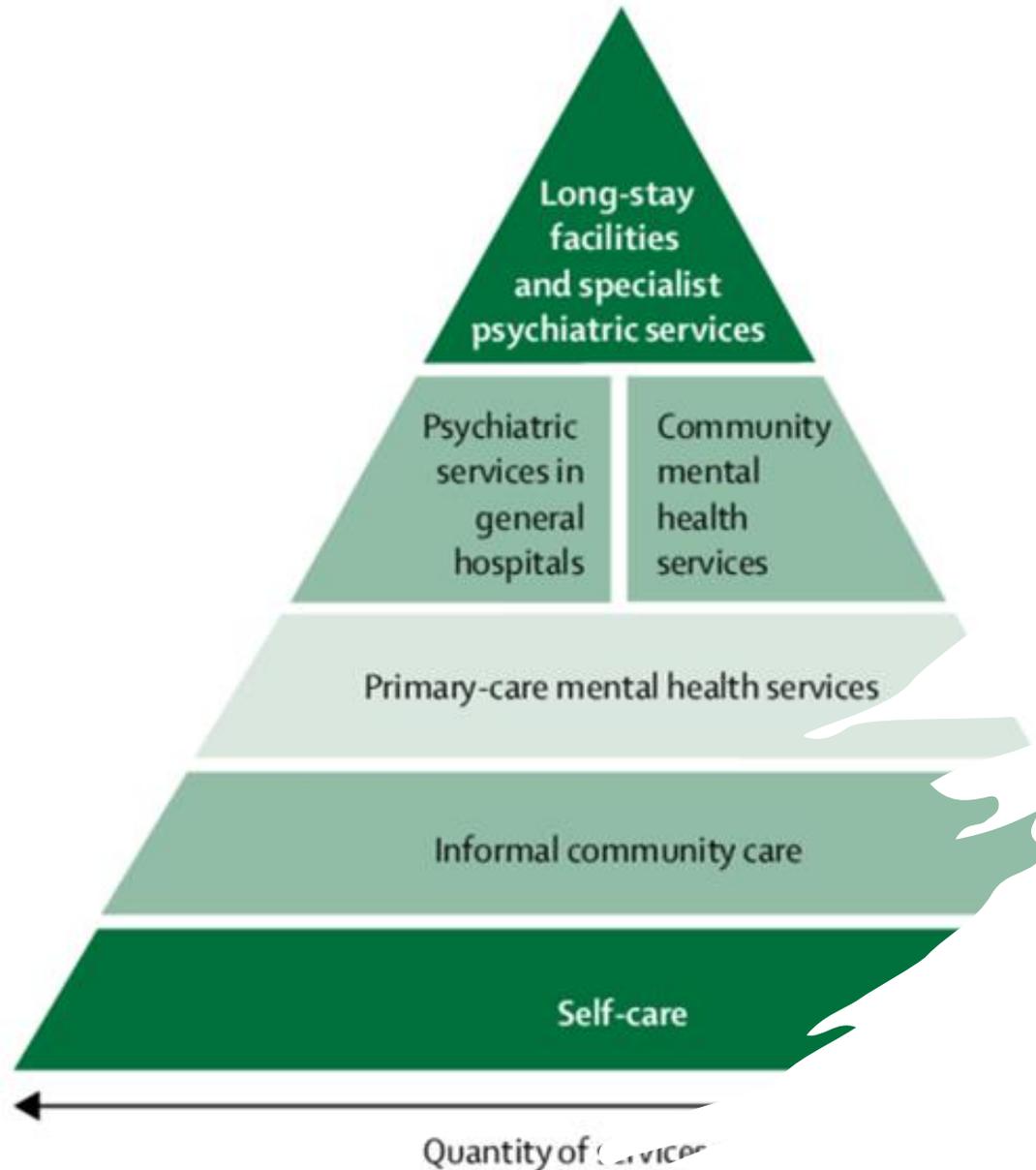
Very
important

- To implement the idea of including people with mental disorders in the organisation of psychiatric services in a way that respects their needs, it is necessary to involve them at every level of the WHO pyramid.
- Peer support workers can constitute an important source of knowledge and support for people with mental disorders and their families, but also for professionals.

The training programmes

- When designing training programmes for PSWs, the needs and opportunities arising at individual levels of the pyramid should be taken into account.
- Peer support workers involved in work on the first two tiers (informal community care) will require a different scope of knowledge and competence than those who will work in formal psychiatric facilities.

The WHO Pyramid



- The WHO pyramid should also be the basis of training programs for peer support workers. It should be included in the development and approval of the qualification framework for the new peer support worker profession.



Thank you for your
attention

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