

N. Sartorius<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Association for the Improvement of Mental Health Programmes, Geneva, Switzerland

---

Care and outcomes for people with schizophrenia have improved in recent years, but further progress is needed to help more individuals achieve an independent and fulfilled life. Despite the recent improvements, many people with schizophrenia still run the risk of social isolation, unemployment, homelessness or imprisonment, poor quality of life, premature death, suicide and discrimination in all walks of life.

Schizophrenia can impose a heavy burden on family, friends and society, as well as substantial economic losses due to treatment costs and diminished working capacity among patients and carers.

These are issues for society as a whole, not just for people with schizophrenia and those who care for them, and policy makers have a pivotal part to play. This presentation will focus on the following specific recommendations for policy change:

- The provision of support for people with schizophrenia to enter and to remain in their community, and the development of mechanisms to help guide them through the often complex benefit and employment systems to enhance recovery. Guidelines and educational programmes should be developed and implemented to support the inclusion of people with schizophrenia in their community, workplace or school.
- The need for consultation with healthcare professionals and other stakeholders directly involved in the management of schizophrenia, including organizations that support people living with schizophrenia, their families and their carers, in order to regularly revise, update and improve policy on the management of schizophrenia.