Forensic Psychiatric Treatment in Finland

Heikki Vartiainen
Medical director
M.D., Ph.D., ass.prof forensic psychiatry
Criminal Sanctions Agency, Health Care Unit
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FORENSIC PSYCHIATRY IN FINLAND

- Forensic psychiatry includes
  - forensic psychiatric examinations
  - treatment of forensic patients

- Forensic patient
  - has committed a crime
  - has undergone a forensic psychiatric examination in hospital or assessment of need for treatment by National Institute of Health and Welfare (THL)
  - has not been sentenced to punishment by court because of irresponsibility (in most cases)
  - has been ordered to psychiatric hospital treatment against his or her will by THL
FORENSIC PSYCHIATRIC EXAMINATION 1.

Court orders the forensic psychiatric examination (usually serious crimes)

Court forwards the documents to THL

THL decides where the forensic psychiatric examination will be carried out (always in hospital)

During the examination, the person can be detained in the hospital against his/her will

Two months time (maximum) to do the forensic psychiatric examination
MAIN CHARGES IN FORENSIC PSYCHIATRIC EXAMINATIONS 2010 - 2012

Homicide 43 %
Other violent crime 37 %
Vandalism (Arson) 9 %
Sexual offence 8 %
Others 3 %
FORENSIC PSYCHIATRIC EXAMINATION 2.

- Average 110 - 130 examinations per year (ordered by court)
- Institutions of examinations in 2012:
  - State mental hospitals:
    Niuvanniemi Hospital in Kuopio (51)
    Vanha Vaasa Hospital in Vaasa (26)
  - University Forensic Psychiatry clinics in Helsinki (Kellokoski hospital 12), Tampere (Pitkäniemi 5) and Oulu (7)
  - Psychiatric Hospital for Prisoners (in Turku 8 and Vantaa 3)
- Men 86 %, women 14 %
- Duration mainly 5 – 7 weeks
- Average cost/exam. > 18000 €
EXAMINATION IN PRACTICE

- Comprehensive gathering of data:
  - previous health and social care contacts
  - childhood and adolescent development and behaviour (health care and school records)
  - adult academic and work history and possible problems
  - criminal records.
- Questionnaires are also sent to relatives, previous employers and other people that knew the person well.

Interviews and assessment by a psychiatrist (usually specialized or specializing in forensic psychiatry), including but not limited to a structured psychiatric interview (usually with SCID-I and SCID-II)

Medical examinations with laboratory tests and other measurements like brain imaging

Interviews by a psychologist and standardized psychological assessment (cognition, personality, psychopathy)

Interviews by a social worker

Observation by the hospital staff
IRRESPONSIBILITY IN FINNISH CRIMINAL LAW

• The offender is irresponsible if, during the offence, he is unable, due to insanity, deep mental retardation or a serious disorder of mental health or cognition, to understand the nature of the act or its illegality or his ability to control his actions is crucially limited because of these reasons.

• The offender is not legally responsible for his/her actions and not punishable by the court.

• The Bord of Forensic Psychiatric Issues at THL determines whether such an offender is in need of treatment.
• RESPONSIBILITY 2010 – 2012 (1988)

• Fully responsible 61 % – normal prison sentence (24%)

• Diminished responsibility 11 % – possibly a shorter prison sentence (54%)

• Irresponsibility 27 % – no time limited involuntary treatment in psychiatric hospital ordered by THL (22%)

• Change in THL ~ 5 % (10%)
INVOLUNTARY TREATMENT AFTER MENTAL STATE EXAMINATION

• The conditions for ordering to treatment in a psychiatric hospital are the same as in ordinary psychiatric care:

1. The patient has been diagnosed as mentally ill

2. His mental illness is at risk of worsening, or he may endanger the health or safety of himself, or the health or safety of others

3. All other mental health services are inapplicable or inadequate

• A minor can be ordered to treatment also if he or she suffers from serious mental disorder
TREATMENT OF FORENSIC PSYCHIATRIC PATIENTS 1.

• About 440 forensic psychiatric patients in Finland (Niuvanniemi ~150, Vanha Vaasa, Kellokoski, Pitkäniemi ~30, (Psych.Hosp.forPrisoners~50)

• Average duration of treatment at hospital is five years (PHP ~30 days, Kellokoski 3 years, Vanha Vaasa 6-8 years, Pitkäniemi 7 years, Niuvanniemi 7-8 years)

• Treatment usually (85 %) begins in a state mental hospital, Niuvanniemi Hospital in Kuopio and Vanha Vaasa Hospital in Vaasa, municipal hospital (10 %) and special care for mentally handicapped (5 %)

• Majority of the patients suffer from schizophrenia, often with comorbid disorders, abuse, dependence and personality disorders (triple diagnoses)
TREATMENT OF FPP 2.

- Current care guidelines and evidence based

- Pharmacotherapy: 2/3 clozapine, olanzapine, combinations (Antipsychotics + Antidepressants, 5-HT + Antiepileptics + Moodstabilisers)

- Psychotherapy: Individual, psychosocial, occupational, cognitive, dependence, group and seldom psychoanalytic

- Somatic treatment and rehabilitation?
TREATMENT OF FPP AFTER HOSPITAL

- Prior to the final discharge the patient can be released from the hospital under supervision of the psychiatric unit of the hospital district
- Decision made by THL, 70 – 80 decisions yearly

- Six months is the maximum duration of discharge (can be continued by the decision made by THL)
  - Kellokoski 25 patients with mean duration of 10 months - Vanha Vaasa 10 patients 8 months - Pitkäniemi 3 patients 17 months

- THL confirms the decision of final discharge
Forensic Psychiatric System in Finland

Ordering a Forensic psychiatric examination by the court (sends the documents to THL)

No examination

Judicial decision, i.e. the final verdict

No examination

- no: 40 - 45
- dim: 150 - 160
- full: 60 000

With examination

- no: 30 - 35
- dim: 15 - 20
- full: 70 - 80

Irresponsible 70 - 80

Assessment of need for treatment by THL

No treatment, no punishment (40 - 45)

Forensic psychiatric examination and statement

- Done on a in-patient basis
- Takes c.a. 2 months

Statement based on records by THL 5 - 10

Forensic psychiatric statement sent to THL, who then either agrees or disagrees on:

- Responsibility
- Need of treatment

Comitting to treatment by THL after examination (30 - 35)

Comitting to treatment by THL with no examination (0 - 2)

Forced forensic care (ca. 450)
- discharged by THL: 20-35
- discharged by THL under supervision (for 6 months): 25 - 40
- extended supervision by THL: 20-30

Decisions made based on statement by treating psychiatrist

No examination no 30 - 35
dim 15 - 20
full 70 - 80

No examination no 40 - 45
dim 150 - 160
full 60 000

Irresponsible 70 - 80

Assessment of need for treatment by THL

0 - 2 per year

Yearly ca. 120-130 persons

THL= National Institute for Health and Welfare, that has a board of forensic psychiatric issues. The board has both psychiatric and legal experts.

Adapted from Irma Kotilainen

Annual figures are based on the years 2008-2009
FUTURE CHALLENGES IN FINNISH FORENSIC PSYCHIATRIC TREATMENT

Effectiveness research of forensic psychiatric treatment

Preventive forensic psychiatry

Improvement of obligatory outpatient treatment

Diminishing coercive measures

Psychoeducation