

Research in the Grisons

Psychiatry in transition

Health services research at the PDGR

The "closed psychiatric ward" - a term that evokes associations and perhaps also fear. After all, who wants to be locked up when the mind becomes ill? The "Stationsklimastudie" of the Psychiatric Services Graubünden PDGR, has been investigating the therapeutic climate in the psychiatric ward since 2018. In three phases over a period of four years, patients and hospital staff are asked how they perceive the atmosphere in their ward: How comfortable or uncomfortable they feel, how threatened or well cared for. Parallel to this, the (door) opening of the psychiatric acute ward is to be carried out in accordance with the concept of "open psychiatry". This opening will take place in two steps, as it goes together with the construction of a new building and the move to a new location. The background for this step is the well-documented assumption that an open mindset towards people with mental illness, more participation and less coercion have a favorable effect on the course of treatment.



This study on the ward atmosphere is part of the fairly new field of health services research, which the PDGR is pursuing systematically. It examines the effectiveness of medical measures under everyday

conditions. The pandemic has also shown that everyday life sometimes puts a spanner in the works of theory. Due to the high occupancy rate of the psychiatric acute ward during the pandemic, the planned opening of the doors had to be postponed. The survey was nevertheless carried out and, thanks to additional questions, was able to provide insights into the impact of the pandemic. The first preliminary results are currently being analyzed for publication.

As a head psychiatric physician, Henrike Wolf oversees this and other research projects at the PDGR. Wolf, having grown up in a village in the German state of Saxony-Anhalt, was an explorer from an early age - albeit initially more in woods and meadows. Later, she became interested in people, too, and decided early on to pursue psychiatry, both clinically and scientifically. She conducted international research in the field of Alzheimer's and led, among other projects, a major study on the topic of "end of life with dementia" in Swiss nursing homes.

Nowadays she is employed part-time by the PDGR for research activities and works the rest of the time in her own consulting practice for psychiatry and psychotherapy in Sils-Maria. This allows her to combine her preferred lifestyle in the alpine environment with her work as a

scientist and physician. "Nothing human is foreign to me," she says, referring to the diversity and depth of her relational experiences, both personal and professional.

A crucial moment for her current work was when she met Andres Schneeberger, the present medical director of the PDGR, in St. Moritz in March 2016. Together with the working group on health services research, they have initiated several interesting projects, some of them with Swiss and international scientific partners. The PDGR also offers good opportunities for interested young researchers to get involved in research.

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The Psychiatric Services Graubünden (PDGR) provide psychiatric care in the canton of Graubünden. www.pdgr.ch

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