



AGENTS OF CHANGE

MENTAL HEALTH AND DISABILITY IN ROMANIA

Who cares? We do. We work with people with special needs. We think you care as well. Here's why.

Although Romania has been part of the EU for more than ten years, people with mental health problems and disabilities are generally treated appallingly. Locked in. Out of sight and out of mind.

Our charity **Agents of Change** has been working in Romania since 1991, registered with the relevant authorities in the UK and Romania.

Our aims To be the **Agents** by which people with mental health problems and other disabilities can **Change** their lives for the better through health education and training and support. Activities and programmes are available to all age groups in our Day Centre and in the locked-up institutions in Botosani County, a remote area in the north-east. Through giving and learning together with dignity our folk develop a sense of self worth.

So what do we do? Podriga Day Centre offers a place of safety and support, in contrast to the institutions. We offer varied daily programmes including hygiene and personal care, art and music therapy, gardening, food gathering from the countryside, outings to church, celebrations of birthdays and holidays, picnics etc.

We take people to expert medical centres and ensure they are appropriately treated. We go to the dentist with them as most have never been before, and we also provide glasses and access to ophthalmology, orthopaedics and other specialists.

Examples (Identities have been changed.) We also work on a one-to-one basis. Years ago we met Simona, an isolated mother of a severely disabled child. We visit her to offer support, taking them into town or bringing them to our Day Centre for recuperation. For Simona it is a safe place where she can allow full release of her emotions as she knows her daughter is okay with us.

We met Mihai in Podriga Neuro-psychiatric hospital in 1991. He used to wait for us to arrive. Smiling and laughing when he saw us he wanted to have the job of carrying our nursing bags to where we worked. Later when we opened our Day Centre he would come and be the delightful but speechless person we knew. Many years on much to our astonishment he started talking and now he speaks freely.

Our Approach We employ local Romanians with professional qualifications and we also provide appropriate education and training. Together we work with up to 1,000 beneficiaries at a current cost of £2 per person per week or £100 a year. We need £100,000 a year to run all our programmes.

What do our named people say about us? *"I wait with eagerness to come to the Day Centre where I enjoy the programmes and liberties and respect."* Beneficiary Dumitriu

"We love the patients and our work." Our Day Centre House Manager Tatiana

"The collaboration is perfect between us and the charity." Director Ioana of a residential centre for 50 adults with mental health and disabilities in Stauceni

So what can you do?

£10 will provide art materials for the painting group

£15 will support a beneficiary for all hygiene needs for one month

£100 will ensure a mum and her disabled child can come on a respite programme over one year

£1000 will pay for a new computer and IT equipment

£4,500 will pay for the salary of a qualified member of staff for one year

£5,000 will cover the full annual costs of running our two seven seat vehicles for essential visits and transport

£9,000 will build a new storage centre to release further space for group activities

We also need expert volunteers in the UK with skills in IT, web development, book-keeping, fund-raising etc. We need a new finance director and other new directors committed to this life developing and life enhancing work.

Our charity **Agents of Change** is unique and you now have a unique opportunity to support us. Unlike other charities we know each of our beneficiaries by their name and their needs. No other organisation there is doing what we do. We receive no grants or other income via the authorities. All is provided by you, the general public.

You can support us financially

Via our website **www.agentsofchange.co.uk**

You can donate on the website via **www.paypal.com** and sign in at **agentsofchange.co.uk**

Via Bank transfer: **Lloyds Bank PLC. Account Number 02417624: Sort code 30 92 90**

Cheque to our registered address below.

Add **GIFT AID**. We can claim 25% extra if you give us your details as a tax payer and are willing to be on our database.

With so many thanks for your support

Alison L Butcher, Founder and CEO

ENABLING PEOPLE THROUGH HEALTH EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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