The Israel Society for the Prevention of Alcoholism

S.	Shoshana	Weiss
----	----------	-------

The Residential Treatment Center for Alcoholics, Ramat Gan, Israel

Shoshana Weiss, DSc, The Israel Society for the Prevention of Alcoholism, 13 Nordau Street, Ramat Gan 52464 (Israel)

The Israel Society for the Prevention of Alcoholism (ISPA) is a nationwide public association. It was founded in 1976 in order to develop and advance research, prevention and treatment of alcoholism. It is supported mainly by the Ministry of Health, but gets some support also from the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and from voluntary contributions.

Since its founding the association has developed services for the treatment of alcoholics and their family members, and established three unique treatment facilities which serve the entire population of Israel. One in 1982 – the residential treatment center in Ramat Gan (28 beds) – which was the first of its kind in Israel and today remains the only public residential treatment facility in Israel. It provides long-term treatment for a period of up to 3 months (behavioral-cognitive therapy), detoxification and short-term treatment for a period of up to 2 weeks and day treatment for various time periods. The second in 1990 – the rehabilitative hostel in Jerusalem (12 beds) -which provides housing and vocational assistance in addition to continued alcoholism rehabilitation, and the third in 1994 – the ‘warm home’ for homeless alcoholics in Petach-Tikva. ISPA offers the interdisciplinary educational prevention curriculum ‘Alcohol and Drunkenness’, which has been published by the association and by the Ministry of Education. It is available in all junior and senior high schools.

The association provides training services to professionals from the fields of health, education and welfare, in order to reinforce awareness about problems associated with alcohol abuse and alcoholism. Workshops for students and parents from all over the country are also provided in the residential treatment center. Social workers and nurses receive individual training from the staff of the residential center, and students from the universities are given help in identifying scientific resource materials. In addition, ‘dry’ alcoholics (at least 2 years of abstinence) participate in a course in order to become a part of the staff which treats alcoholics in the center. ISPA offers advice on legal and legislative matters concerning alcohol, and its representatives take an active role in the meetings of the ‘drugs and alcohol’ committee of the Israeli parliament. It also offers advice to the police on the enforcement of existing alcohol regulations.

A hot line is available 24 h a day and prevention materials in Hebrew, Arabic, Russian and Amharic are developed and distributed among adults and adolescents. In addition, the association publishes a newsletter 4 times a year, and holds an annual conference aimed at professionals. Every year the conference has a different topic, such as ‘Alcohol and Women’, ‘Alcohol and Sex’, etc. Part of the 400-450 conference participants are also members of the association. The conferences are ‘covered’ by the media.

ISPA initiates and supports research in the alcohol domain, which is carried out with very limited resources. Actually, it serves as the main research institution in the alcohol domain in Israel, which sometimes cooperates with the universities in Israel. Almost all of the Israeli research in

the field of alcohol – in the social, epidemiological, preventive and therapeutic domains – are conducted in the framework of the association. Therefore, most of the Israeli publications concerning alcohol, which include information leaflets and pamphlets, ‘point of view’ articles, research reports and manuscripts, and conference papers, stem from the association, and they encompass about 250 items in Hebrew and in English (in the foreign professional literature). The society’s board of directors includes a chairman, 12 members, a treasurer and a controller (a judge). The working team includes about 30 persons – 1 psychiatrist, 1 physician, 1 administrative manager, 1 scientist who is responsible for prevention and research, develops prevention materials and carries out research projects, 2 secretaries and the rest are nurses, social workers and trained ‘dry’ alcoholics.

Professionals and researchers of foreign associations and institutions in the field of alcohol abuse are welcome to contact ISPA in order to establish international contacts and exchange knowledge and publications.

Further information can be obtained from:

© 1995 S. Karger AG, Basel