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**Written Submission**

**to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

**on the Draft Guidelines on Deinstitutionalization,**

**including in emergencies**

Submitted by:

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With the support of

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*Richard lived in an institution for 14 years. He was never happy in the institution.[[1]](#footnote-2)*

Overall, I found the whole Guidelines to be very vague. *(It was only after repeatedly reading it with a social worker and discussing specific cases that it became more understandable to Richard.)*

What does it actually mean to close an institution? Mainly, I am afraid that I would end up in the Psychiatric Hospital in Bohnice. Before the institution is closed down, something better must be provided for these people so that they are not worse off.

Many people are happy in the institution because otherwise they'd be on their own. So it's true that it's really important that people in institutions must get help while moving out and after, like taking medication and taking care of their homes.

It's also very important that people have money for help to get outside the institution. Because, for example, I pay for the assistance, and somebody may not have the money, and it's very difficult to find a job. Many of my friends don't have jobs, even though they want to.

I don't know how to abolish the institutions and I don't know if the governments will actually abolish them. Politicians don't talk about it at all. I don't think they really care. If they talked about it, maybe I would vote for them, but not all people can vote. A lot of people have restricted legal capacity and can't even vote.

I was helped to get out of the institution by a social worker who worked there at the time. He was completely different from the other staff. The other staff were very strict with me, very neutral. And he doesn't work there anymore. I think it's very important that the staff in the institutions help with that, because otherwise people don't even know that they don't have to be in the institution, and they can't move out on their own.

*(On the activities of the institution)* I didn't have to take part in a group outing, for example, if I didn't want to, but it's true that I didn't have anything else to do then.

I think, institutions want to keep people in and not help them out. The staff themselves in those institutions must want to change that. But you don't find people like Mr. B. *(the social worker who helped Richard out of the institution)* in institutions.

**NOTE: The views presented in this submission are of Mr. Richard and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the organisations that made it possible for Mr. Richard to participate in the consultation process.**

1. The text in italics are the comments of the social worker who consulted the guidelines with Richard. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)