



MENTAL HEALTH EUROPE



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NEWSLETTER N° 11/2011

November 2011

This Newsletter is published with the support of PROGRESS, the European Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity (2007-2013). The information contained in this publication does not necessarily reflect the position or opinion of the European Commission. The Commission is not liable for any use that may be made of the information contained in this Newsletter. Mental Health Europe is the EU Liaison Office for Mental Health Promotion.

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Only three weeks before the winter holidays, Mental Health Europe is as busy as ever. On December 7, we are organizing our annual awareness-raising event at the European Parliament, focused on the topic of active ageing, and particularly the impact of (un)employment on an ageing Europe. Hosted by MEP Frieda Brepoels, and gathering speakers from both mental health organizations and the Flemish government, it should be a very interesting and thought-provoking event.

Moreover, to come to the aid of our members who might be struggling with often cumbersome European Union terminology, we have compiled a guide to EU Institutions and policies relevant for people working in the health sector, or for mental health service users, which we will publish in 21 languages in December.

Mary Van Dievel, MHE Director

I. MENTAL HEALTH EUROPE

MHE NEWS AND POLICY WORK

MHE to organize lunch debate at European Parliament

Mental Health Europe decided to choose active ageing as the topic for its 2011 Awareness-raising event at the European Parliament. Together with MEP Frieda Brepoels, MHE is organizing a lunch debate where mental health professionals and government officials will have the opportunity to discuss the value older people bring to the workplace, and the innovative new mechanisms needed for older people to continue contributing to society in a meaningful and constructive manner.

Staying active – The impact of (un)employment on the mental health of an ageing Europe will take place on Wednesday, December 7, at the European Parliament in Brussels. Speakers will include Richard Wynne, Director of Work Research Centre in Ireland, Bart Julliams, Adviser for Employment in the Cabinet of Philippe Muyters, Flemish Minister of Finance, Budget, Employment, Planning and Sport, Jacques van der Vliet from the Standing Committee of European Doctors and Brian Howard, CEO of Mental Health Ireland.

For more information, or to register, please contact Mental Health Europe at secretariat@mhe-sme.org or Katrien Uyttersprot at katrien.uyttersprot@europarl.europa.eu.

European Year 2012 NGO Coalition launches common manifesto

The Stakeholder Coalition of the European Year 2012 for Active Ageing and Solidarity Between Generations, of which Mental Health Europe is a member, launched a common manifesto during an event of the AGE Platform Europe in the European Parliament in Brussels on November 7, 2011. The Manifesto calls for creating partnerships at EU and national level in order to promote active ageing and solidarity between generations and includes recommendations to the EU and stakeholders at national and local levels to achieve an age-friendly European Union by 2020.

Among the demands are the call for an inclusive labour market that ensures the participation in paid work of younger and older people, including those with disabilities or chronic conditions, supports the intergenerational knowledge transfer, and enables workers to both maintain their health and reconcile their work and private lives. The manifesto also mentioned that conditions and opportunities to grow and age in good mental and physical health should be provided through disease prevention and the promotion of physical activity, a healthy diet, wellbeing and health literacy, as well as through action on key social determinants of ill-health.

To read the full manifesto, go to: http://www.age-platform.eu/images/stories/EN/ey2012%20manifesto_final%20with%20logos.pdf

To visit the EY 2012 website, go to: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/ey2012.jsp>

To learn more about MHE's activities in the frame of the EY 2012, contact MHE Social Policy Officer Astrid Mechel at astrid.mechel@mhe-sme.org

European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Aging

On November 7, 2011, the Steering Group of the pilot European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing agreed on joint actions within the Strategic Implementation Plan. The European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing is an integral part of the Innovation Union, one of the seven flagship initiatives of the Europe 2020 Strategy which aims to create smart, sustainable and inclusive growth by the end of this decade.

The Steering Group of this platform consists of specialists in the health and social fields, businesses, civil society and public authorities. Innovation is the most important aspect in the Strategic Implementation Plan and by using it, the Steering Group hopes to realize its overarching objective, namely to ensure that the average European citizen has two more active and healthy years to live by 2020. The implementation plan focuses on three main areas of life events: prevention, care and cure, and independent living. To be more concrete, five specific actions have been chosen and will be launched next year:

- Co-operation to help prevent functional decline and frailty, with a particular focus on malnutrition
- The promotion of successful innovative integrated care models for chronic diseases amongst older patients, such as through remote monitoring
- Improving the uptake of interoperable ICT independent living solutions through global standards to help older people stay independent, mobile and active for longer
- Finding innovative ways to ensure patients follow their prescriptions
- Discovering innovative solutions to prevent falls and support early diagnosis for older People

Mental Health Europe has contributed to the working groups, making sure that mental health is included in the implementation of these objectives. Moreover, from 2012 on, more mental health organizations will be able to engage in this platform, as the European Commission will launch further calls for stakeholder involvement.

For more information on the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing, please go to: <http://ec.europa.eu/active-healthy-ageing>

Policy Conference "Youth and Social Inclusion"

On November 17 -18, Mental Health Europe attended the policy conference entitled "Youth and Social Inclusion," organized by the European Commission DG Education and Culture.

The conference focused on the presentation of the policy review paper '*Social inclusion of socially excluded youth: more opportunities, better access, and higher solidarity*,' which builds on the evidence provided by the Youth Research projects on Social Inclusion. The said projects were also individually presented and highlighted several aspects of social exclusion of young people, focusing on employment and education, and highlighting practical solutions to these problems.

Mental health was specifically addressed, especially regarding minority groups, immigrants and homeless young persons. The latter group was said to deal with depression and anxiety as they did not get the proper support and information to gain access to education, jobs or even a place to stay.

The projects offered several solutions to these problems such as linking social services with health and education services. More outreach work and information should be available for young people suffering found in severe circumstances. The projects also focused on how the community can get involved in helping young people develop in an educational setting.

The overall conclusion was that although the education system is a primary place where health, social and economic inequalities should be diminished, the system is currently widening the inequalities gap. Furthermore the success rate of education is now often defined by the chances of young person finding and gaining a job, whereas this may neglect other aspects of education that are just as useful and necessary for society.

More information regarding the conference is available at:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=nl&catId=88&eventsId=384&furtherEvents=yes>

UPDATE ON NEW ITEMS ON MHE WEBSITE

The MHE website has been updated with new information in the following sections:

- Home page - The description of our awareness-raising event at the European Parliament is now on the front page, under News. The poster of the said event is available at <http://www.mhe-sme.org/assets/files/Final%20poster%20Dec%207.pdf>

MHE REPRESENTATION AT VARIOUS MEETINGS

On November 3-4, MHE President Nace Kovac and MHE Network Development Officer Yves Brand attended the World Health Organization Meeting on the Mental Health Strategy, which took place in Utrecht, The Netherlands.

On November 4, MHE Director Mary Van Dievel attended the MHE Board meeting, which took place in Brussels.

On November 5, MHE Director Mary Van Dievel and the MHE staff attended the MHE Extraordinary General Assembly, organized in Brussels.

On November 7, MHE Social Policy Officer Astrid Mechel attended the European Parliament Intergroup meeting "Towards a successful European Year 2012 on Active ageing and Solidarity between Generations", organized by the European Parliament and AGE Platform Europe in Brussels.

On November 8, MHE Director Mary Van Dievel, MHE Social Policy Officer Astrid Mechel and MHE Information and Communications Officer Silvana Enculescu participated in a meeting with Romanian NGO Estuar, in Brussels.

On November 8-9, MHE Human Rights Officer Gabor Petri participated in a consultation and peer-review meeting at the Fundamental Rights Agency, in Vienna.

On November 15, MHE Information and Communications Officer Silvana Enculescu attended the EU-Health Editorial Board Meeting, organized by DG Sanco in Luxembourg.

On November 16, Astrid Mechel represented MHE during the Social Platform Ad-hoc meetings on the National Reform Programmes as well as on November 17 during the meeting on the proposal for a regulation on a EU Programme for Social Change and Innovation, both meetings were hosted by the Social Platform in Brussels.

On November 17-18, MHE Network Development Officer Yves Brand participated in the Conference on Youth and Social Inclusion, organized by the European Commission DG Education and Culture, in Brussels.

On November 17-18, Senior Policy Officer Elisabeth Muschik gave a presentation at the annual conference of the German Association for Social Psychiatry (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Soziale Psychiatrie) in Ravensburg-Weissenau, Germany.

On November 22, MHE Daphne Project Coordinator Karina Huberman attended a discussion on domestic violence and its repercussions on professional life, which took place in Brussels.

On November 23, MHE Human Rights Officer Gabor Petri attended a lobbying event in the European Parliament on supported decision making, organized by Inclusion-Europe in Brussels.

On November 24, MHE Human Rights Officer Gabor Petri attended the Social Platform Fundamental Rights Working Group meeting, organized in Brussels.

On November 25, MHE Daphne Project Coordinator Karina Huberman attended a meeting of the WeDo Project, organized by the AGE Platform in Brussels.

On November 28, MHE Daphne Project Coordinator Karina Huberman attended the conference Ageing in dignity: Designing effective strategies for tackling elder abuse, which was organized in Brussels.

On November 30, MHE Network Development Officer Yves Brand and MHE Senior Policy Adviser Stijn Jannes attended the EuroHealthNet Policy Dialogue, which took place in Brussels.

NEWS FROM MHE MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

Mind publishes satire newspaper

A long-time campaigner for a fair and effective welfare and benefits system, MHE member Mind felt that their efforts were restricted by the extremely negative coverage of disability benefits in much of the British media. Know from the people with mental health problems that they represent that such reporting could have detrimental impact on their mental health, Mind also believed that, by misleading the public into believing that these benefits are beset with fraudulent claims, the coverage meant that they had to fight against the tide of public opinion, as well as against political intransigence.

As a response, Mind has produced its own mock-tabloid newspaper, The Daily Stigma, to try and counter this negative coverage, to give a voice to the vast majority of disabled people who claim these benefits genuinely, and to show people that it tends to be the system treating people badly rather than the other way round.

Mind handed out around a thousand copies of the paper at the Party Conferences in September and October, donning red tabards, shouting "Read all about it! Get your Daily Stigma!", and getting them into the hands of influential politicians, journalists and party activists. They also went out to three London stations on an evening in late October and handed out a thousand more to unsuspecting commuters on their way home from work.

As a result of their activity, Mind has received significant online coverage: they had a blog featured on the Guardian website, over 300,000 people heard about their campaign through Twitter, and almost 20,000 people looked at the online version of the paper. Mind also received particularly positive feedback from people with mental health problems, who welcomed the fact that Mind was "fighting back" against the negative coverage.

To read *The Daily Stigma*, to go http://www.mind.org.uk/campaigns_and_issues/policy_and_issues/making_benefits_fairer-welfare_reform/the_daily_stigma

To share *The Daily Stigma* online, use #DailyStigma on Twitter.

Pro mente Austria launches internet platform for young people whose parents have mental health problems

Pro mente Austria launched a new project based on an idea from youngsters whose parents suffer from mental health problems. The young people mentioned the need to form a network with peers in the same situation, with whom they could exchange information and advice.

To help them, the project aims to provide information adapted to different age groups, show ways to tackle isolation. Pro mente will set up an interactive online platform filled with useful information, and providing opportunities for mutual support. Pro mente organized a first project session on November 19-20, where children and young people who have parents with mental health problems discussed how such a platform should be organized and look like.

For more information, please contact office@promenteaustria.at

Pro Mente Academy to organize Master's in Mental Health

In March 2012, Pro mente academy in Austria will start the second round of its Master's degree in mental health. The degree is running for a duration of five semesters and comprises four sections - social psychiatry, law and economics, management and research methods.

The degree combines practical as well as theoretical education provided by national and international lecturers. The aim of the Master's is to prepare students for future management positions in the field of social psychiatry and psychology.

For more information, please contact Christa Jellinek at ulg@promenteakademie.at

MHE Vice-President receives Hans-Strotzka prize

Rita Donabauer, managing director of pro mente Upper Austria and Mental Health Europe Vice-President, was awarded the Hans-Strotzka prize for her long-term engagement in the psycho-social field on November 12 in Linz. When handing out the award, Prof. Werner Schöny pointed out Rita Donabauer's important role in the development of psychosocial services. With a background in social work, Rita Donabauer has been a part of pro mente Upper Austria since 1976 and took up her management position there in 1991. At the European level, Rita Donabauer is also the President of the organization EURO-PSY as well as Vice President of Mental Health Europe.

Centre for Mental Health welcomes sickness absence review

Centre for Mental Health chief executive Sean Duggan welcomed the recommendations from the Sickness Absence Review that help employers support people with continuing and unpredictable conditions to stay in work. Mental ill-health accounts for a large proportion of sickness absence in the UK, and remaining in work has been proven to be an important factor in recovery."

The Review recommends a new Independent Assessment Service (IAS) that employers and GPs can refer long-term sickness absence cases to for advice.

Each year around 11 million employees take sick leave and, while most people return to work, around 300,000 people go on to claim health-related benefits. Over 80% of all sickness absence spells are short term (up to one week). Long-term absence (over 4 weeks) make up only around 5% of all spells, but almost half of total working days lost.

The review also supports the removal of the assessment phase for claimants of Employment and Support Allowance, which the reviewers claim will allow claimants who need support to get it sooner and help those who can work find a job quicker.

To read the Sickness absence review, to go <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/policy/welfare-reform/sickness-absence-review>

For more information, please contact: Andy Bell at andy.bell@centreformentalhealth.org.uk

Mental health should be an NHS priority, Centre for Mental Health says

“The new Operating Framework sets out a clear challenge to the NHS [National Health service] next year to make mental health an equal priority to physical health,” Centre for Mental Health chief executive Sean Duggan said.

The NHS Operating Framework sets the priorities for the NHS in England for the next year. Responding to the publication of next year’s Operating Framework, Sean Duggan believed that the Government’s mental health strategy has sent out a clear message to the whole of the NHS that mental health should be given ‘parity of esteem’ with physical health.

For more information, please contact Andy Bell at andy.bell@centreformentalhealth.org.uk

Horatio to organize European Festival of Psychiatric Nursing

Mental Health Europe member Horatio will be the organizer of next year’s **European Festival of Psychiatric Nursing, which will on September 20-23** in Stockholm, Sweden.

The conference will gather people from across the world interested in exploring, expanding and building their knowledge on mental health and mental illness - prevention, intervention and research. The purpose of the event is to generate inclusive dialogue and stimulate new conversations on all aspects of mental health problems.

For more information, visit www.psykriks.se

II. EU INSTITUTIONS AND OTHER BODIES

European Parliament issues report on European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion

On November 15, the European Parliament adopted a report on the European Platform Against Poverty and Social Exclusion, one of the seven flagship initiatives of the EU 2020 Strategy for Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth. In their report, Members of European Parliament called for exploring the possibility to introduce binding Europe-wide minimum

income legislations, classifying poverty as a violation of human rights. Poverty and social exclusion were also characterized as a key social determinants of health, MEPs calling for the provision of affordable access to health services for all.

The full text of the report can be downloaded at:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT%20TA%20P7-TA-2011-0495%200%20DOC%20XML%20V0//EN>

European Parliament calls for match between skills and market needs

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the Agenda for New Skills for New Jobs, one of the seven flagship initiative of the EU 2020 Strategy, on October 26. The text proposes a series of measures to develop a better match between people's skills and labour market needs. It explicitly mentions increasing women's participation in the labour market and effectively implementing the inclusion priority of the strategy as a vital precondition for reaching employment targets by 2020. Members of European Parliament called on the EU Member States to provide opportunities for parents - especially women, single-parent families, disadvantaged or disabled people - integration not , only into working life but also into lifelong learning processes. The resolution stresses the economic arguments for up-skilling, labour market integration, social inclusion, effective combating of discrimination and better utilization of the assets of all workers, at the same time recalling that work-life balance, education and improvement of human capital also have many non-economic benefits for the individual, which should also be taken into account.

The full text of the resolution can be downloaded at:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&reference=P7-TA-2011-0466&language=EN>

LifeLong Learning Programme - Call for Proposals

The European Commission launched a call for proposals in the frame of the Lifelong Learning Programme. The Call covers different areas: school education (Comenius sub-programme), university education (Erasmus), adult education (Grundtvig), vocational training (Leonardo da Vinci), multilateral projects, networks, as well as accompanying measures. The projects eligible for participation can encompass a variety of activities, such as encouraging co-operation between the world of education, training and work, supporting of initial and continuous training of teachers and trainers, promoting the acquisition of key competences throughout the education and training system, or promoting social inclusion and gender equality in education and training, including the integration of migrants. A full description of the programme's priorities for 2012 for funding is available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/education/llp/doc/call12/prior_en.pdf

The deadlines for submitting the applications vary according to the respective sub-programme, However, for most of them, the deadline is February 2, 2012. A co-financing of 25 % is required.

Applicants must be established in one of the following countries:

- the 27 Member States of the European Union,
- the EEA/EFTA countries: Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland,
- candidate countries: Croatia, Turkey.

The full Call for Projects can be downloaded at:

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/funding/2012/index_en.php

Commission outlines priorities for new EU Health programme

On November 9, the European Commission outlined its future priorities in the field of health for 2014-2020. The "Health for Growth Programme," as proposed by the European Commission, aims to complement and support the policies of the Member States and contribute to the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy.

Mental Health Europe welcomes the European Commission's commitment to continue action in the field of health until 2020 and the increased budget which will surely help the Commission in realizing its goals.

The Programme has four main objectives :

- To contribute to the creation of innovative and sustainable health systems.
- To increase access to better and safer healthcare for all EU citizens.
- To promote good health and prevent diseases by addressing the key risk factors of most diseases, namely smoking, alcohol abuse and obesity.
- To protect people from cross-border health threats.

Mental Health Europe is satisfied with the priority on health promotion and disease prevention, under which the Commission will also address mental health. At a time when the economic crisis causes EU member states to rethink their health strategies and budgets, prevention of mental health problems and the promotion of mental health wellbeing is more important than ever before. The economic burden of mental health problems is specifically felt due to loss of productivity and the increase demand on disability benefits, both largely prevented through early interventions and support.

The Programme furthermore states that in the field of health more cooperation between different sectors (such as education, employment and housing) is needed. As mental health is an aspect that touches all aspects of a persons' daily life, MHE fully supports this strategy and encourages the European Commission to seek out effective ways of collaboration with other sectors.

In the coming months, the Programme will need to be approved by the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union. MHE will actively engage with all parties to ensure that mental health is sufficiently addressed in the years to come.

European Commissions' Public Health Website Survey

Since October 2010, the European Commission's Public Health website has had a new design, content and navigation options. As this website is now one year old, the European Commission would like to know if the changes have been useful and if more improvements are still needed.

To get this information, the Commission is asking website users to answer a short survey on the basic aspects of the online platform.

The deadline for this survey is December 9.

A link to the survey is available at:

<http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/ipm/forms/dispatch?form=phwssurvey&lang=en>

DG Sanco publishes mental health reports

DG Sanco has recently published 3 reports regarding mental health which are definitely worth the attention of any mental health professional or mental health service user. The reports are available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/health/mental_health/docs/healthcare_mental_disorders_en.pdf

http://ec.europa.eu/health/mental_health/docs/outcomes_pact_en.pdf

http://ec.europa.eu/health/mental_health/docs/long_term_sustainability_en.pdf

News from European Countries

New University of Lisbon offers International Master's in Mental Health Policy and Services

The **International Master in Mental Health Policy and Services**, an international course of study promoted by the New University of Lisbon, in collaboration with the WHO, is now currently accepting applications for the academic year 2012-2013.

The main scope of the Master Degree in International Mental Health Policy and Services (MHPS) is to build capacity of mental health professionals to lead and contribute to conceiving, formulating, implementing and evaluating:

- National Mental Health Policy
- National Mental Health Legislation
- Mental Health Services and Care Delivery

The course will start on April 9, 2012, with a two-week residential session, at the Faculdade de Ciências Médicas campus in Lisbon. A second two-week residential session will take place in Lisbon, from October 8-19, 2012. Between the two residential sessions, the students will participate in e-learning activities under the orientation of supervisors.

The second year of the Course will be dedicated to the development of a project and the elaboration of the dissertation under the orientation of a supervisor.

For more information about the course, go to <http://www.fcm.unl.pt/immhps/>

News from other ENGOS

European Network of (ex-) Users and Survivors of Psychiatry (ENUSP) receives grant to strengthen its European network

Mental Health Europe would like to congratulate the European Network of (ex-) Users and Survivors of Psychiatry (ENUSP) on receiving funding from the Open Society Foundations Mental Health Initiative. The funds will allow ENUSP to redesign their website, communicate actively with members and build a member database.

For more information please read the ENUSP newsletter:
http://www.enusp.org/newsletter/enusbulletin_no1-oct2011.pdf

EASPD celebrates 15th anniversary at European Parliament

To celebrate its 15th anniversary, the European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities invited all its members and friends at the European Parliament on November 9.

The event was hosted by MEP Dieter Koch with the support of other leading MEPs and with special guests from the European Commission, the Council of Europe and the European Disability forum.

Since 1996, EASPD has brought together 10.000 service providers from all over Europe and beyond: 15 years of decisive achievements and flourishing activities.

During these years, EASPD has endeavored to represent and fight for the needs of the sector at all levels, to inform its members about European and international policy developments as well as to support them to innovate their services for the benefit of persons with disabilities.

EPHA to organize public health event in Poland

On December 12, the European Public Health Alliance (EPHA) will organize a public health event in Warsaw, Poland, in co-operation with ASPHER and the Polish National Institute of Public Health.

The conference will tackle the issue of advocacy and capacity in public health in Poland, focusing on building capacity and creating multi-level partnerships.

More information on this event is available on the European Public Health Alliance website:
In English at: www.epha.org/a/4763
In Polish at : www.epha.org/a/4837

For more information, please contact Dorota Sienkiewicz at dorota@epha.org

III. CONFERENCES AND TRAININGS

PICUM International Conference - "Undocumented Women in Europe: Bringing Local Realities to EU Policy Level." December 12-13, 2011. Brussels, Belgium

For more information, please contact Eve Geddie , PICUM Programme Officer at eve@picum.org

Do you wish to share information, announce something or make a contribution to the MHE Newsletter?

Please send your contributions to info@mhe-sme.org