



July 2008



Leadership Summit

The second World Mental Health Advocacy Leadership Forum took place in Toronto from the 3rd to 5th July, hosted by the World Fellowship for Schizophrenia and Allied Disorders. Representatives from EUFAMI, Mental Health Europe, Gamian Europe, the World Federation for Mental Health and the World Fellowship for Schizophrenia and Allied Disorders attended. Inger Nilsson and Kevin Jones represented EUFAMI. A very intensive programme of meetings took place over the three days and very shortly a full report of the summit will be issued to members. Further details will be in next month's Bulletin.

New resources on combating Stigma

Health Scotland has gathered a wealth of experience in dealing with the stigma related to mental illness and is now committed to sharing these experiences and resources with other countries planning campaigns or related activities. On 24th April Health Scotland hosted a developmental seminar in Edinburgh, Scotland, supporting Member States in developing their anti-stigma programmes, and launched a European Briefing Paper and Guidebook for Action produced in partnership with WHO Europe. Sigrid Steffen, current EUFAMI President Designate attended and spoke about EUFAMI's Zerostigma programme. A link to the Health Scotland material is available on the WHO mental health website - http://www.euro.who.int/mentalhealth/20080428_1

New Booklets from WFSAD

The World Fellowship for Schizophrenia and Allied Disorders (WFSAD) has announced that its series of pamphlets on the subject of 'Schizophrenia Information for Families' has been amalgamated into three new booklets: *How to Behave; Maintaining Your Own Health; Taking Medications* [12 pages, PDF]; *The Warning Signs of Mental Illness (or Relapse); Managing a Crisis; the Risk of Suicide* [8 pages, PDF]; *Major Depression, Bipolar Disorder; Schizoaffective Disorder* [8 pages, PDF]. These publications are available in several languages, including Spanish, Persian and Russian. Log onto <http://www.world-schizophrenia.org/publications>

Europe's mental health in the spotlight

On 13 June, Commissioner for Health Androulla Vassiliou launched the European Pact for Mental Health and Well-Being at the High Level Conference on Mental Health in Brussels. This was the first conference to bring together ministers, experts, patients, health professionals, researchers and other stakeholders to agree future joint actions to improve mental health across Europe.

The Pact is a call for partnership action. It recognises the health, social and economic benefits of good mental health for all and the need to overcome the stigma still associated with mental illness. An estimated 11% of Europeans experience some form of mental illness each year. Depression is one of the most common and serious mental disorders, affecting 9% of adult European men and 17% of adult European women in western and southern Member States. Mental health disorders can lead to suicides, with one person every 9 minutes committing suicide in the EU.

The mental health situation varies widely across EU countries. For instance, in some Member States, suicide rates are among the highest in the world, while in others they are among the lowest. To address mental health problems and to benefit from shared experience, ministers and experts from across Europe pledged to work together and focus on 5 key areas: the prevention of suicide and depression; mental health in youth and education; mental health in workplace settings; mental health in older people; combating stigma and social exclusion.

For further information, please visit:

http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/mental/mental_health_en.htm

The state of Mental Health across the EU

The EU has recently published a set of overviews, by individual country, on the situation of Mental Health Promotion and Mental Disease Prevention developed so far in each of the EU countries and activities to date. Some interesting reading and they can be downloaded at

http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/mental/ms_overview_en.htm

Cross Border Healthcare

The EU Commission has recently adopted a proposal for a directive to facilitate the application of European patients' rights in relation to cross-border healthcare, as well as a Communication on improving co-operation between Member States in this area. Up until now, uncertainty existed on this matter and with this proposal the Commission aims to provide legal certainty on this issue. This follows calls from both the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers for the Commission to propose a specific initiative on cross-border healthcare, in a way explicitly adapted to, and respecting, the unique nature of the healthcare sector. In addition, the proposed Directive provides a solid basis to unlock the huge potential for European cooperation to help improve the efficiency and effectiveness of all EU health systems. The draft directive and communication on application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare can be found at:

http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_overview/co_operation/healthcare/cross-border_healthcare_en.htm

▶ Leadership summit

▶ New resources on combating Stigma

▶ New Booklets from WFSAD

▶ Europe's mental health in the spotlight

▶ The state of Mental Health across the EU

▶ Cross Border Healthcare

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