



EPA COURSE TITLE	How to support families of patients with severe mental disorders
COURSE DIRECTOR	Andrea Fiorillo, Italy
COURSE CO-DIRECTORS	Umberto Volpe, Italy
COURSE LEVEL	Basic
EDUCATIONAL INTENTIONS/ COURSE OUTCOMES	Adequately support families of patients with severe mental disorders; Improve collaboration with users and careers; Provide update information, communication skills and problem-solving strategies to users and careers; Promote a recovery-oriented strategy for patients with severe mental disorders.
COURSE DESCRIPTION	The shift of the mental health model of care from the hospital to the community for patients with severe mental disorders has resulted in the recognition and acceptance of a major role played by families in the recovery process of their mentally ill relatives. Family members want to help their ill relative, although they did not have the adequate instrument to deal with these situations. Caregivers' need to be trained to manage the relatives' illness to be optimally beneficial for the patients, thus family members and friends need education and information about disorders, and personal support. Family interventions have been proposed for an optimal management of patients with severe mental disorders as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, major depression, eating disorders and these interventions are a powerful addition to the psychiatrists' armamentarium. Family interventions, such as psychoeducation promoting understanding the mental disorder, result not only in improved interpersonal relationship but also in improved treatment participation. Moreover, establishing open lines of communication with family members allows mental health professionals to provide support, treatments, or referrals if necessary, resulting in improved patients' treatment.
PREREQUISITE KNOWLEDGE	Basic knowledge on main clinical, social and epidemiological characteristics of schizophrenia, depression, bipolar disorder, eating disorders
COURSE METHODS AND MATERIAL	Small group discussions Case studies Role play Vignette Slides Handouts
TARGET AUDIENCE	All mental health professionals, particularly psychiatrists
RECOMMENDED READINGS	N/A
LANGUAGE(S)	English, Italian