



[WE join forces to improve mental health – will YOU join US?](#)

As patients, family members and healthcare professionals, we join forces to amplify the voice of the mental health sector and call on YOU to join us.

Good mental health is crucial for personal, social and economic development

Why:

- Mental ill health affects more than one in six people across the European Union in any given year, with a total cost of over EUR 600 billion – or more than 4% of GDP – across the 28 EU countries (Health at a Glance, 2018).
- Mental ill health can affect persons at any age and in a variety of forms (e.g. depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, ADHD...).
- Mental ill health has costs and consequences that impact individuals, families and carers, health and social systems, society and the economy.
- Poor mental health is consistently associated with unemployment, less education, low income or standard of living, poor physical health, adverse life events, poor quality of life and stigma.
- Social and economic inequality and exclusion are both a cause and a consequence of mental ill health.

Despite the above, mental health has been accorded relatively low priority. There is an urgent need for better and wider understanding of mental health and for effective action.

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Patients, families, family carers and health professionals have now joined forces to ensure that:

- patients and their families are at the centre of all aspects of healthcare provision;
- integrated and person-centred care and treatment is available, accessible, affordable, appropriate and of high quality, and that unmet needs are addressed;
- awareness, knowledge and understanding of mental ill health is increased;
- the rights of those affected by mental ill health are developed and enforced;
- cooperation and communication between all stakeholders involved is strengthened;
- mental health becomes a mainstream element in all EU policies with an impact on health;
- patients, families, carers and health care professionals are pro-actively involved in EU and national policy and service development, including safe and digital health solutions;
- the value and contribution of families and carers is recognised and taken account of in policy development (e.g. work/life balance) and future policy scenarios;
- training in, education on and understanding of mental illness of (health) professionals is improved and harmonised.

Most importantly: as there is no health without mental health, we work towards 'parity of esteem': valuing mental health equally with physical health.

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The **MEP Alliance for Mental Health** works towards these objectives;
We call on you to support its work and join today by clicking [HERE](#)