



8 April 2020

**EPA EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

President

P. Gorwood, *Paris*

President Elect

P. Falkai, *Munich*

Past President

S. Galderisi, *Naples*

Secretary General

J. Beezhold, *Norwich*

Treasurer

G. Dom, *Boechout*

Council of NPAs Chair

S. Vahip, *Izmir*

EPA BOARD

J. Beezhold, *Norwich*

G. Dom, *Boechout*

P. Falkai, *Munich*

A. Fiorillo, *Naples*

Secretary for Sections

S. Galderisi, *Naples*

P. Gorwood, *Paris*

C. Hanon, *Paris*

Secretary for Education

H. Kärkkäinen, *Helsinki*

T. Kurimay, *Budapest*

M. Männikkö, *Valkeakoski*

D. Palao Vidal, *Barcelona*

M. Pinto da Costa, *London*

A. Raballo, *Perugia*

M. Rojnic-Kuzman, *Zagreb*

M. Schouler-Ocak, *Berlin*

A. Szulc, *Warsaw*

S. Vahip, *Izmir*

D. Wasserman, *Stockholm*

J. Wise, *London*

To whom it may concern

RE: endorsement of the SIP (*Società Italiana di Psichiatria*) Call on the provision of adequate resources to the mental health care settings during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The EPA is the largest international association of psychiatrists in Europe, with active members in as many as 88 countries and 44 National Psychiatric Association Members that represent more than 80,000 European psychiatrists. The EPA and its NPAs deal with psychiatric related disciplines and focus on the improvement of care for the mentally ill, in partnership with other mental health workforces and with associations representing patients (GAMIAN-Europe) and families (EUFAMI).

With this letter the EPA would like to endorse the Call of the Italian Psychiatric Association (SIP) for the responsible health authorities at national, regional and local levels to provide adequate resources and avoid neglect and discrimination of patients and professionals working in the mental health care settings during the COVID-19 emergency.

There is a wide consensus that the current COVID-19 pandemic not only affects physical health, but also mental health and well-being. The pandemic and the related containment measures - namely quarantine, physical distancing and self-isolation - can have a detrimental impact on mental health. Everywhere around the world, mental health professionals, including psychiatrists, are collaborating to care for and support people with existing mental health concerns, but also to those who are now suffering from the psychosocial consequences of the pandemic.

In addition, patients with mental health disorders and comorbid COVID-19 may have special needs in hospital settings: they may be unable to cooperate with the isolation protocols or even engage in dangerous behaviours, increasing the risk of dissemination of the infection.

The EPA calls upon national, regional and local health authorities to take into high consideration the requests made by the societies that represent professionals of the mental health care sector, who are confronted daily with the specific challenges and needs of the population they take care of and are facing exceptional physical and psychological demands, due to the increased workload.

In support of the SIP's recommendations, the EPA commits to disseminate information and raise awareness about the initiatives that the health authorities will implement to ensure the rights of people with mental health problems to get adequate access to quality care and treatment at these critical times, while respecting the safety of all.

Yours sincerely,

Prof. Philip Gorwood
EPA President