



BRUSSELS - 9 December 2016

Time to act together towards better health for all in Europe!

*From policies to practice - from practice to policies:
Creating synergies for better health in Europe*

9 December 2016, 13:30 to 17:00

Venue: University Foundation, Rue d'Egmont 11, 1000 Brussels

Meeting Room: Félicien Cattier

Necessary actions for providing quality health care to all

With increased demand and limited resources, health care systems all over Europe are facing the challenge of ageing populations and the rapid rise of mental illnesses and other chronic diseases. Today, chronic diseases represent the major share of the burden in the European Union and represent the 70 to 80% of health care expenditures, at an estimated € 700 billion per year. By affecting productivity, chronic disorders have a strong impact on economic growth and social development in Europe, in particular in the workplace. To efficiently address these challenges, an integrated, horizontal approach is essential - involving all the relevant levels, from communities to policy makers.

To tackle this matter, today the European Psychiatric Association (EPA), the main association representing psychiatry in Europe, is hosting the event *"From policies to practice - from practice to policies: Creating synergies for better health in Europe"* at the University Foundation in Brussels, where the EPA's EU liaison office is located.

The event focuses on two main topics that are high on the EU agenda, namely the issues of integrated health care and mental health in the workplace. High-level representatives from European Institutions, health professionals, academics, patients and civil society have been called together to discuss possible solutions for better health and health care. In addition to EPA leaders, Keynote speakers include: Martin Seychell, Deputy Director General of the EU Commission Directorate General on Health and Food Safety; Hilikka Kärkkäinen, President of Gamian-Europe; David McDaid, Expert on Health Policy and Health Economics at the London School of Economics; and Jorge Costa-David, Policy Officer in the Health and Safety Unit of the EU Commission Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion.

"There is an urgent need to rethink health care in Europe and move towards a more holistic approach to improve health and health care efficiency" Prof. Wolfgang Gaebel, EPA President, said. *"This is of particular concern when it comes to mental health. Despite the increasing EU and WHO efforts in this area, there is still a lack of clear and direct reference to mental health in most integrated care strategies. Coordinated actions across services should be put in place to integrate prevention, promotion, treatment and rehabilitation addressing both mental and physical health care needs of the population"*, he continued.

Regarding in particular the topic of mental health in the workplace, the EU has increasingly acknowledged the impact of mental disorders on work performance and on the overall health status of the population. Evidence shows that total productivity costs of absenteeism due to mental illness rose to over €130 billion in recent years within the EU, without counting the costs of treatment, social welfare benefits or other consequences for society at large.

As stressed by Prof. Silvana Galderisi, EPA President Elect, *"action should be taken at all relevant levels and across policy areas, encouraging the involvement of policy makers, professionals and key stakeholders"*. She also underlined that *"the expertise of EPA and its Council of National Psychiatric Societies and Associations in*

the field of mental health in the workplace and other sectors can prove useful in contributing to the work of the European Commission around this issue”.

EPA represents a network of 40 National Associations that will engage in collecting relevant data but also communicate with local and national stakeholders and lobby jointly for better health care and integrated approach. EPA hopes that these efforts, along with the inter-sectoral collaboration promoted through events like this, will lead to the creation and implementation of comprehensive health policies throughout the EU.

Programme available [here](#)

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About the European Psychiatric Association

The European Psychiatric Association (EPA) was founded in 1983. With active individual members in as many as 88 countries and 40 National Society/Association Members who represent about 78 000 European psychiatrists, the European Psychiatric Association is the main association representing psychiatry in Europe. Its mission is to improve psychiatry and mental health care in Europe.

EPA members include leading experts in numerous fields. EPA's activities address the interests of psychiatrists in academia, research and practice throughout all stages of career development. Together, EPA members contribute to the life of the association and to the development of psychiatry in Europe. Each member has the possibility to actively contribute to ongoing projects and play a key role in shaping the future of the association and its policy.

In recent years, EPA has been strengthening the profile and specificity of EPA in the EU policy scene through an increasing involvement of the EPA National Psychiatric Societies/Associations (NPAs) in the European policy developments. Notably, EPA launched its policy and networking activities through the opening of an office in Brussels in 2015.

EPA accomplishes its mission through the following activities:

- Annual European Congress of Psychiatry
- *European Psychiatry Journal*
- EPA Courses, Summer School, Faculty Workshops and other forms of training
- Early Career Psychiatrists Committee and Programme
- Research Prizes and Scholarship Programme
- 21 Scientific Sections
- Cooperation with National Psychiatric Societies/Associations through EPA membership
- Guidance papers and position statements on related topics of interest
- Initiatives on improving ethical standards of psychiatric care and practice
- Collaborative activities in partnership with international organisations working in the field of psychiatry and mental health care.

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