



January 2010



- ▶ **New Year message from Sigrid Steffen**
- ▶ **John Henderson, RIP**
- ▶ **European Medicines Board (EMA)**
- ▶ **Prevention of Depression and suicide**
- ▶ **EU Commission – Public Health**
- ▶ **Hearing of Commissioner Designate for Health and Consumer Policy**

For more information, please look at the web site www.eufami.org or contact EUFAMI at info@eufami.org

EUFAMI
Diestsevest 100
B-3000 Leuven
Belgium

Tel +32 16 74 50 40
Fax +32 16 74 50 49

Happy New Year

New Year message from Sigrid Steffen, EUFAMI President

At the beginning of this New Year, I would like to extend best wishes for 2010 to all our readers. 2009 was a very busy year for all of us at EUFAMI ending with our very successful conference, *The Forgotten Children*, in Vilnius where close on 200 delegates attended. A lot of work still has to be done arising out of this conference, including the establishment of an Action Network to carry on the work and ideas which were identified during the conference.

2010 will see EUFAMI continuing its work to represent the needs of families and raise awareness on the important role family members can play. One example of this is that we will continue to be an active participant in the implementation of the Pact for Mental Health and Well-being. Through 2009, EUFAMI has played a role in the first two thematic conferences – Mental Health and Youth (Stockholm) and Depression and Suicide (Budapest).

We will also hold our annual Board meeting in May where members will have an opportunity to meet up again, renew friendships and to learn more about the activities which are ongoing within the EUAMI membership.

Hopefully you will continue to receive and read our monthly Bulletins – it is our modest attempt to keep you briefly informed of some important things which are happening throughout the year in the sphere of Mental Health and specifically of interest to families and carers. Happy New Year.

John Henderson, RIP

It was with great sadness that we recently learned of the death of John Henderson who has been closely associated with Mental Health Europe for many years as a Senior Policy Adviser. We very much appreciate the support which John gave to EUFAMI during its formative years. He dedicated his life to improve the lives of others less fortunate. John will be very much remembered by the great work which he has undertaken over the years. Latterly he has been involved in working towards a better mental health for people and communities in Europe.

The European Medicines Board (EMA) to become closer to consumers

The board of EMA has endorsed a new strategy to further involve patients and consumers in the work of the Agency. The new strategy makes a number of proposals that considerably widen the scope of patients' and consumers' contribution to the Agency. This includes consultation during benefit-risk evaluation of medicines, participation as observers in meetings of the Pharmacovigilance Working Party and contribution to the Agency's safety communication. The new strategy also foresees financial support to facilitate the participation of patients' and consumers' representatives. The document endorsed by the Agency's Management Board is available at <http://www.ema.europa.eu/pdfs/human/pcwp/1072309en.pdf>.

Prevention of Depression and Suicide - Making it Happen (Budapest)

This conference, which was the second of the five thematic conferences that are planned to take place as part of the implementation of the European Pact for Mental Health and Well-being, took place in Budapest on the 10th and 11th December 2009. Full details of the conference, including copies of the presentations and participants are now available at http://ec.europa.eu/health/mental_health/events/ev_20091210_en.htm.

EU Commission – Public Health

The Public Health Directorate of the European Commission recently launched its new website, fully renovated both in the content and in the form. 150 new texts and 14.000 documents are organised in a thematic approach, while the information is presented by topic. The web address is http://ec.europa.eu/health/index_en.htm.

Hearing of Commissioner Designate for Health and Consumer Policy

The candidates for the new European Commission were invited to public hearings by the appropriate parliamentary committee(s) in January. On the 14th January, Mr John Dalli from Malta (Commissioner Delegate for Health and Consumer Policy) met with the members of the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee, the Internal Market and Consumer Protection Committee and the Agriculture and Rural Development Committee to answer their questions. If you are interested in watching the hearing, then log onto <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/hearings/commissioners/getHomePage.htm?language=EN> and click on the photo of John Dalli. Initial feedback from Mr Dalli's hearing has been positive. EUFAMI is very much looking forward to meeting the new Commissioner Designate and to appraise him of the work we are involved with.

