



March 2015



'When East meets West - Families at the heart of EUROPE'



EUFAMI's 6th Major European congress will take place on September 19th - 20th in Sofia, Bulgaria.

The venue will be the Ramada Hotel, Sofia. The provisional programme will soon be published on the EUFAMI website. *Stay tuned for more information!*

EUFAMI features in reply from EU Commissioner for Health and Food Safety

In response to a written question from MEP Nicola Caputo (S&D) related to the mental health of young people and continuity of care, the EU Commissioner, Mr Vytenis Andriukaitis, stated that *'the Commission is involving in its policy dialogue with Member States the European Federation of Associations of Families of People with mental illness (EUFAMI). The organisation's principal aims include the improvement of the level of support for the families, caring relatives and friends of people with mental illness. EUFAMI's role in this dialogue is to voice the needs and expectations of family members for support.'*



▶ **EUFAMI's 2015 Major European Congress**

▶ **EUFAMI features in reply from EU Commissioner for Health and Food Safety**

▶ **Study on link between mental and physical health launched**

▶ **New free family support resource**

▶ **WHO Mental Health Gap Action Programme (mhGAP)**

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Study on link between mental and physical health launched

It has been long known that physical and mental health problems are interconnected. Still, public health policies and health practitioners rarely acknowledge the fact, which is surprising given the amount of evidence we find around the issue. People with long term physical diseases are twice as likely to have some kind of mental problems as well. Furthermore, the connection seems to be reciprocated: chronic somatic diseases often result in serious mental health problems and mental health issues can also lead to chronic physical problems. In the study, MHE and the Maastricht University analyse how the EU and Member States can better provide policies that reflect this link, in order to ensure more adequate policy solutions and projects, to the benefit of the persons concerned as well as society as a whole. Log onto <http://goo.gl/hA370Q> to read the study.

New free family support resource

The Family Guide to Mental Health Recovery collects the wisdom of family members and family support counsellors to help new families learn, gain hope and access support resources online. The goal is to provide context, perspective, personal experience, awareness of self-care and a wide range of relevant information for all family members. This online guide include hours of family video interviews, a feature length documentary 'The Journey Home', dozens of text resources and articles from family members, practitioners and educators. The aim is to be understandable and approachable for families facing a complex, confusing and often difficult health condition. For more information log onto <http://tinyurl.com/kyl46zg>.



WHO Mental Health Gap Action Programme (mhGAP)

Mental, neurological, and substance use disorders are common in all regions of the world, affecting every community and age group across all income countries. While 14% of the global burden of disease is attributed to these disorders, most of the people affected - 75% in many low-income countries - do not have access to the treatment they need. The WHO Mental Health Gap Action Programme (mhGAP) aims at scaling up services for mental, neurological and substance use disorders for countries especially with low- and middle-income. The programme asserts that with proper care, psychosocial assistance and medication, tens of millions could be treated for depression, schizophrenia, and epilepsy, prevented from suicide and begin to lead normal lives – even where resources are scarce. Read the mhGAP January 2015 newsletter at <http://tinyurl.com/nkzlksk>.



Prospect – EUFAMI's Training Programme

Prospect, EUFAMI's Training Initiative, is currently being used by people in over 14 European countries. Prospect is a very unique peer to peer programme and was developed by EUFAMI members from many countries. If you would like to get further information, contact Rita Geerts on project.admin.office@eufami.org.



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