



June 2010



Long time EUFAMI staff member retires

Time marches on for everyone and the end of June heralds another change at EUFAMI when our long time colleague, Willemien Schut, retires. To many people, Willemien was indeed the face of EUFAMI; the first person whom many persons came in contact with at EUFAMI. Willemien has dedicated many years of her time to EUFAMI, having been with EUFAMI since its inception in 1992. We thank her for her work and effort throughout the intervening years.

Willemien now deserves some time off to herself and therefore on behalf of everyone at EUFAMI and all our friends, colleagues and readers we wish her a long and happy retirement. No doubt she will remain in touch with EUFAMI. Good luck, Willemien and enjoy your retirement years.



Mental Health and Well-being in Older People - High-level conference in Madrid

Mental Health

A conference, organised by the European Commission and the Spanish Ministry of health and social policies, highlighting the importance of improving mental health and well-being in older people took place in Madrid on the 28th and 29th June. This event was part of the European Pact improve the mental health of older people. This conference had been rescheduled from April, when it was cancelled due to the volcanic ash problem.

Ursula Brand, EUFAMI's Board member from Germany, made a presentation on the role of families as carers during the parallel session on 'Informal Carers'. During her presentation she highlighted the challenges which family members face on a daily basis. Ursula also pointed out some key differences between caring for persons with mental illness and those who care for persons with illnesses such as Alzheimer's or Dementia. She also stressed the necessity to nurture the culture of 'sibling carers'.

Does schizophrenia need a new name?

Anoiksis, the Dutch association for people with chronic psychoses or schizophrenia, has held a competition to find a new and better name for schizophrenia. It has aroused much interest in mental health circles in the Netherlands. There were 320 entries from all corners of the country and the jury, consisting of a psychiatrist, the chair of Ypsilon (the family association and a member of EUFAMI), a former chair of Anoiksis (the patient association) and a journalist from the NOVA TV News programme, chose as the winning entry - Dysfunctional Perception Syndrome. The winner of the first prize, a trip to Ghent in Belgium and the Golden Bleuler (a trophy to commemorate the inventor of the name schizophrenia a hundred years ago), was announced last October. Already nearly 50% of Dutch psychiatrists are in favour of scrapping the term schizophrenia.

Circus show in favor of DELPHUS

The Delphus programme is a Belgian programme for children with autism and its patron is H.R.H. Princes Esmeralda. This year they will be sending 11 children to work and play with dolphins in Mundomar. A fundraising circus gala event will be held on the 25th 2010 at 08.00PM at the Bouglione Circus, located at the Atomium. We have been requested to publicise this event and are happy to do so.



EUFAMI launches the 'Friends of the Forgotten Children'



On the 2nd June, EUFAMI launched its virtual Action Network at a Mental Health event in the EU Parliament in Brussels. The event, Toward Europe 2020: The role of Mental Capital and Well-being, was hosted by Nessa Childers, MEP from Ireland. This virtual network, which is titled the 'Friends of the Forgotten Children', has been created by EUFAMI as a follow up to the very successful conference which it held in Vilnius, Lithuania in November 2009. The conference was a cross sector multi disciplined event, where delegates discussed and tackled the issues and challenges faced on a daily basis by children across Europe whose parents are affected by mental illness. The network uses Facebook, which is currently the most widely used social networking platform, and will be managed and monitored by EUFAMI.

SPEAK OUT – stories of young people and mental health

This is a book of stories relating to young people and their mental health experiences. SPEAK OUT has been designed to engage young people in discussions about mental health and demystify mental health issues. It was written for young people so the language is simple and the information easy to understand. For more information on how to obtain the book, contact Mardi Diles at mardi@ssys.org.

Summer is here

Now that the weather appears to be turning sunnier, we would like to wish all of our readers an enjoyable summer and hope that you all take time out to refresh yourselves, both mentally and physically. We will continue to publish throughout the summer months.

Note to readers – if for some reason you no longer wish to receive the EUAMI @Bulletin, please send an email to info@eufami.org, with the words 'Unsubscribe Bulletin' on the subject line.

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

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