



## **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN PACT ON MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**

The EC has the pleasure to announce the first edition of a regular newsletter on the implementation of the European Pact on Mental Health and Well-being. In the Newsletter below, and subsequent issues, you will find a summary of progress to date and an outline of the ongoing implementation phase of the Mental Health Pact as well as updates on current activities and events being held in connection with the Pact.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND: THE LAUNCH OF THE EUROPEAN PACT ON MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING.

- In June 2008, the “**European Pact on Mental Health and Well-being**”, an intersectoral statement on mental health action in Europe, was launched at the **High Level Conference “Together for Mental Health and Well-Being”** by the European Commissioner for Health.
- The Pact focused on **5 thematic priority areas**:
  1. Prevention of Depression and Suicide;
  2. Youth, Education and Mental Health;
  3. Mental Health in Workplace Settings;
  4. Mental Health and Older People, and;
  5. Combating Stigma and Social Exclusion.
- Preparations for the High Level Conference included the writing of 4 background papers (“Consensus Papers”) in 4 of the priority areas, a more concise “policy briefs”, as well as a research paper on the 5th priority area. The papers were produced through a consultation process which aimed to include as many and as varied stakeholders in each priority area as possible.
- **Further information of the process** towards the Pact can be obtained at:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph\\_determinants/life\\_style/mental/mental\\_health\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/mental/mental_health_en.htm)  
and, <http://www.ec-mental-health-process.net/index.html>

## 2. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PACT, AFTER THE HIGH LEVEL CONFERENCE.

- The Pact is now entering its implementation phase, in which stakeholders and policy makers in each of the 5 priority areas are encouraged in action towards promoting mental health and well-being and preventing mental disorders. This will continue through 2009 and 2010.
- The Pact will be implemented through a series of Five Thematic Conferences in each of the priority areas, which will be hosted by Member States in partnership with European Commissions’ bodies and other stakeholders.
  - 29 – 30<sup>th</sup> Sept 2009 – Mental Health in Youth and Education. – Stockholm, Sweden.
  - 10 – 11<sup>th</sup> Dec 2009 – Prevention of Depression and Suicide – Budapest, Hungary.

- 21 – 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2010 – Mental Health in Older People – Madrid, Spain.
- 8 – 9<sup>th</sup> Nov 2010 – Mental Health in Workplace Settings – Berlin, Germany.
- 2nd Semester 2010 – Combating Stigma and Social Exclusion – TBC.
- A wide variety of stakeholders and experts will be asked to engage with the process and get involved in these events in several ways: by gathering examples of action and good practice; by joining the consultation process to develop the conference working documents; by raising awareness of the Pact: capitalising on the momentum created, using events at the EU, national or Regional level; by assisting with building capacity and mobilising support for the Pact.

### 3. MENTAL HEALTH IN YOUTH AND EDUCATION PRIORITY AREA THEMATIC CONFERENCE. Stockholm. 29-30th September 2009.

- The first Thematic Conference will be on Mental Health in Youth and Education and which will be organised by DG SANCO and the Swedish Public Health Department, as an event under the Swedish Presidency.
- The conference will pursue three main **objectives**:
  1. To raise awareness about the importance of promoting mental health and well-being and of preventing mental disorders in youth and education;
  2. To enable an exchange at EU-level on policy activities, good practices by stakeholders and research projects in Member States, and;
  3. To endorse an implementation framework for the Mental Health Pact in the field of mental health in youth and education.
- **Five sub-themes** have been identified for the process: 1. Parents and the early years; 2. Educational settings and learning; 3. The community environment; 4. The role of media, internet and new technologies, and; 5. The role of health services in promotion and prevention.
- **Preparations are underway** for this event and the intention is to make this preparatory process as interactive and inclusive as possible.
- All interested stakeholders, representatives, professionals and experts are invited to feed into the event in a number of ways:
  - The conference **background document** will be developed, adding a practical implementation dimension to issues raised in the consensus paper. This will provide a starting point and guide discussion at the conference.

- An **online database** of good practices in mental health, including policies, programmes, tools and resources, is being built up for the conference.

#### 4. CALL FOR ACTION: HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED IN THE PROCESS...

- If you would like to **join the consultation process** for the Youth and Education Thematic Conference background document, please send a mail to the technical secretariat:

[ec-mentalhealthprocess@gencat.cat](mailto:ec-mentalhealthprocess@gencat.cat)

- **Volunteer to be a country focal point** for your country – to be asked to gather national examples of good practice action in mental health for children and adolescents, and to assist the dissemination process at your regional/national level. For further information please contact the technical secretariat at: [ec-mentalhealthprocess@gencat.cat](mailto:ec-mentalhealthprocess@gencat.cat)

#### 5. LATEST NEWS AND EVENTS

*Recent event:*

- **"REDUCING THE PSYCHOSOCIAL IMPACT OF THE FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC CRISIS" ROUND TABLE.** 27<sup>th</sup> April 2009. Brussels.

On April 27th, as part of the implementation of the European Pact for Mental Health and Well-being, the European Commission hosted a round table event on the negative effects of the current economic crisis on the mental health of populations and how these could be tackled. Representatives of the EU, Member States, and experts from a variety of different fields participated in the discussions. While the difficulties of evaluating the impact of the crisis on mental health were stressed, initial data suggests an increase in first-time diagnoses of mental disorders in some countries. The importance of protecting vulnerable groups through promoting social justice and of strengthening mental capital in the EU was highlighted.

*Upcoming events:*

- **"MENTAL HEALTH AND GENDER"**. 13th May 2009. Brussels.

This meeting will be organised by the SUPPORT project, with DG-SANCO. It will discuss some of the key issues, challenges and opportunities relating to gender and mental health, with the aim of ensuring that gender issues are flagged during the implementation of the European Pact. For further information, please contact: [chris@sdcmh.org.uk](mailto:chris@sdcmh.org.uk)

- **“YOUTH AND HEALTH” CONFERENCE.** 9th – 10th July 2009. Brussels.

This event will be organised by the European Commission in cooperation with the European Youth Forum and other youth organisations. Young people from across Europe are expected to attend, as well as representatives from youth organisations, health professionals and institutions. The conference aims to listen to young people and involve them in decision making processes regarding their health, as well as to generate commitment from stakeholders to improve the health of youth. Further information is available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/health-eu/youth/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/health-eu/youth/index_en.htm)

- **DE-STIGMATISATION AND IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF CARE IN PSYCHIATRY.** 28th – 29th May 2009. Prague.

This event will be organised by the Ministry of Health of the Czech Republic, in collaboration with the European Commission’s DG SANCO and under the auspices of the Czech Presidency of the Council of the European Union. Special attention will be given to the objectives of modern psychiatric care in healthcare systems, to highlight the purposes of improving the quality of care and to emphasise the importance of de-stigmatisation of mental illnesses and affected persons.

- **CHILD INJURY PREVENTION. CHILD VIOLENCE PREVENTION. CHILD MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION. INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR.** 4th – 5th June 2009. Prague.

This international seminar will be held under the auspices of the Czech Presidency of the European Union, the Czech Ministry of Health, the Minister for Human Rights and minorities in Czech, the General Health Insurance, UH Motol, Czech, and WHO Country office in the Czech Republic. The seminar will focus on the importance of preventing violence and injury of children and child mental health promotion with the aim of synchronising these related strategies into a systematic health policy.

**This newsletter has been prepared by the technical secretariat of MH Basis at Gencat (Government of Catalonia, Spain), in collaboration with the European Commission’s DG Health and Consumers, to support the implementation of the European Pact on Mental Health and Well-being, priority area on Youth and Education.**