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ProMenPol would like to wish all of its partners, members and friends and supporters a Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.

Recent Developments in ProMenPol

By the end of its first year, ProMenPol has succeeded in gathering a community of interested stakeholders willing to engage actively in the field of positive mental health promotion.

At its first conference in October, 56 practitioners from the schools, workplace and older people's settings met to look into the theoretical background of the ProMenPol tools database. The lively and fruitful discussions that took place there provided the ProMenPol team with interesting feedback and possibilities of improvement.

In the meantime these recommendations have been compiled and evaluated, which has resulted in the update, amalgamation and finalisation of the ICF and MHP Codes to be used for each setting. Version 1 of the database will be available for practitioners at the beginning of February 2008.

The official start for (most) field trials is thought to happen at the next ProMenPol conference which will take place on June 19th - 20th in Berlin. There participants will be trained for the successful planning and implementation of their mental health promotion project.

More information about participating in field trials is now available in the section "field trials" on our website.

Last but not least ProMenPol has been in contact with national and European policy makers discussing ways of integrating mental health into policies at Community and national level. More information about the actions that took place in this field is given in the articles below.

The ProMenPol Policy Workshop

ProMenPol held its first annual policy workshop in Brussels with representatives from the Commission and National Agencies on November 28th 2007. Representatives were present from DG Employment, Research, Sanco and Education.

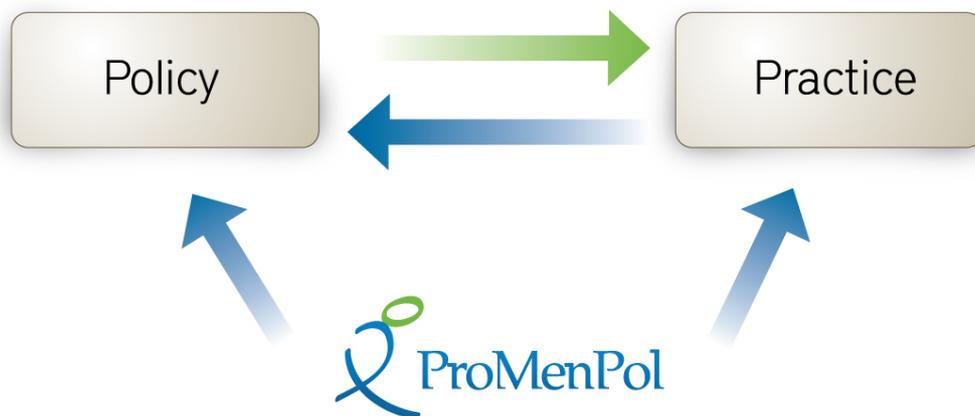


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The aim of the workshop was to inform participants about the project in general and in particular to inform them about the unique approach that ProMenPol is developing to effective communications between policy makers and practitioners.

This approach comes from within the action research tradition. It proposes the use of new documentation procedures by practitioners whereby good practice in mental health promotion is documented and assessed by practitioners themselves and that this information is passed on to policy makers in a timely and digestible way. It does not seek to overturn the traditional role of scientific research in acting as an intermediary between policy and practice - rather it seeks to provide information that is reliable and targeted towards the needs of policy makers.



The ProMenPol Approach

The workshop also undertook extensive discussions on the issues on identifying



appropriate policy makers and on the types of information that policy makers need to improve policy making. A distinction was drawn between policy makers, policy administrators and policy influencers. Policy makers and influencers include people who make decisions about what a policy should be and how it should be drawn up, e.g. politicians, senior civil servants. Policy



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influencers include people who have an interest in a policy area such as social partners and representative groups. Policy administrators generally come from the civil service.

Different types of information are needed to target these groups as are different communication strategies. ProMenPol is committed to developing strategies for each of these groups over the coming months in order to ensure that we can make maximum impact on mental health policy in the future.

ProMenPol at the European Parliament

Mental Health Europe, John Bowis MEP and ProMenPol together for the promotion of mental well-being in employment On 5 December 2007, Mental Health Europe (MHE) and John Bowis MEP (EPP-ED Group) hosted a lunch debate on "Equal Chance, Equal Respect: Promoting Mental Health and Well-being in Employment".

The debate focused on a key cross-cutting issue impacting on social and health policies in the EU, namely the mental well-being of people in employment.

In Europe, one in five people at work suffers from a high level of stress at work, and stress related problems are either the leading or the second most common cause of absence from work. Stressors at work increase the risk of anxiety, depression and burn out.

The debate emphasised how the provision of training and social support at work, good work design and organisation and the development of empowerment can lead to improvements in competence, coping strategies, job satisfaction, work capacity and reduced stress.

Richard Wynne, Director of the Work Research Centre (Ireland) and expert partner in the ProMenPol research project, was one of the key speakers. He highlighted some well known workplace factors that can promote good mental health and the two main approaches to promoting mental health in the workplace. Dr. Wynne concluded by stressing the need to raise awareness of the possibilities of the workplace for mental health promotion, encourage the practice of mental health promotion at the workplace and provide support for workplaces wishing to undertake mental health promotion. He mentioned the contribution of the ProMenPol project to meeting this need.

The debate fed into the Lisbon strategy 2008-2010 and the EU Health Strategy 2008-2013. The Lisbon strategy for the economic and social renewal of Europe highlights the need for both more and better jobs, and for improved social inclusion and gender equality. The Commission's Health Strategy White Paper recognises that mental health problems are a major cause of work absenteeism and early retirement, thereby causing immense economic losses and social burdens.

Encouraging and supporting the creation of healthy companies and workplaces, which include safe working environments and mentally healthy working practices,



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can help promoting mental well-being and addressing psychosocial risk factors at the workplace.

For more information: the MHE Secretariat, email

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The ProMenPol Brochure is Now Available in German

For all our German Colleagues the German Version of the ProMenPol Brochure is now available.

You can download this e-brochure at

<http://www.mentalhealthpromotion.net/?i=promenpol.en.publicity.67>.

A French Version of the e-Brochure will be available shortly so watch this space

About the Project

The project runs from January 2007 –December 2009 and is being led by the **German Federal Institute for Occupational Safety and Health - BAUA**. A complete listing of Project Partners and contact points is presented below.

More information can be found on the project website at: www.mentalhealthpromotion.net

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