Mental health is everyone's concern: Joint statement by 17 European organisations calling for more action on mental health in Europe

Brussels, Monday 13th February- Mental health is everyone's concern. It is central to all our lives and impacts our well-being, our work, our societies, our families and our economies. We, the undersigned European organisations, are concerned by the mental health of millions of Europeans and we have several proposals about how the services and support they receive can be improved and supported by the European Union.

Mental health is as essential as physical health to well-being, and the partners to this Joint-statement do not want to lose the momentum built up by the European Joint Action for Mental Health and Well-being. Our joint statement urges the EU and Member States to step up efforts to fully implement the Joint Action's resulting Framework for Action as a priority. The Framework for Action is the first comprehensive European policy on mental health which gathers guidelines and recommendations for Member States.

Maria Nyman, Director of Mental Health Europe said *"Mental health is a cross cutting issue, we need to work all together to implore Member States to implement the Framework for Action so it does not become just another document"*

More can be done to improve the promotion of positive mental health and access to services in Europe through the mainstreaming of mental health in all policies at European and national levels (through health, employment, and social policies). The Statement was developed by Mental Health Europe and EUFAMI in collaboration with a number of organisations through the EU Health Policy Platform.

Aagje Ieven, EUFAMI Secretary General affirmed *"All signatories are committed to taking this statement forward as a framework to work together with the EU and Member States to improve mental health and well-being in Europe."*

Mental health is a pivotal and crosscutting issue. There is much more space for the EU to address mental health in an integrated way and our joint statement develops recommendations on how to ensure:

1. **Parity of esteem**, which is the principle by which mental health must be given equal priority to physical health
2. A **life-course approach** to mental health which supports better understanding of mental health for all age groups and transitional times (mental health and pregnancy, mental health and ageing…)
3. More attention is given to **mental health in the workplace** which is too often overlooked in occupational health and safety policies
4. The improvement of **mental health** treatment **in primary care** settings and encouraging more holistic and person-centered approaches to mental health.

Through the Joint Action and its Framework for Action, the EU and Member States already have an existing framework with tools on how to improve mental health and well-being as well as mental health systems in partnership with service users, families and carers.

So, what are we waiting for to take action to improve the mental health of millions of Europeans?

// ENDS

Note for Editors
The Joint Statement is available on the Health Policy Platform.
Read more on the Joint Action for Mental Health and Well-being HERE
Read more on the Framework for Action HERE

Signatories:

Mental Health Europe
European Federation of Associations of Families of Persons with Mental Illness (EUFAMI)
Council of Occupational Therapists for the European Countries (COTEC)
Eurocarers
EuroHealtNet
European Brain Council (EBC)
European Federation of Psychologists' Associations (EFPA)
European forum for primary care (EFPC)
European Patients' Forum (EPF)
European Psychiatric Association (EPA)
European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)
European Region of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA Europe)
Global Alliance of Mental Illness Advocacy Networks-Europe (Gamian Europe)
International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT)
Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM)
The International Federation for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus (IFSBH)
The Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME)

For more information please contact:

Ophelie Martin
Mental Health Europe Communications Officer
ophelie.martin@mhe-sme.org

Aagje Ieven
EUFAMI Secretary General
secretarygeneral@eufami.org