



2018-2019 WORK PROGRAMME



Global Alliance Mental Illness Advocacy Networks - Europe

Representing the interest of persons affected by mental illness and advocating their rights

GAMIAN-Europe (Global Alliance of Mental Illness Advocacy Networks-Europe) has ambitious plans over the next two years intended to focus on mental health and patients' needs through advocacy, awareness raising/education and capacity building.

GAMIAN-Europe was established in 1998 as a representative coalition of patient organisations. Putting the patient at the centre of all issues of the EU healthcare debate, the organisation aims to bring together and support the development and policy influencing capacity of local, regional and national organisations active in the field of mental health.

This document sets out the main activities the organisation intends to carry out during 2018 and 2019. We are also open to suggestions for other activities which are in line with GAMIAN-Europe's vision, mission and priorities.



Visit to the Headquarters of Awakening Foundation, a member of GAMIAN-Europe in Budapest, Hungary.

GAMIAN-Europe's overall objective is to represent the views of patients and ensure that their voice is heard in the development of sound EU and national level policies, which contribute to the prevention of mental health problems and ensure good services, care and empowerment for those affected by such issues.

OVERALL FOCUS DURING 2018-2019

During 2018-2019, GAMIAN-Europe will focus on the following main priority themes:

- ◆ **Depression**
- ◆ **Empowerment and self-management of treatment and care**
- ◆ **Mental health in the workplace**
- ◆ **Effectively addressing schizophrenia**
- ◆ **Suicide prevention and digitalisation**



HOW TO ACHIEVE OUR OBJECTIVES?

To achieve our overall objective, we have developed an action plan centred on three pillars: **advocacy, education/awareness raising and capacity building.**

ADVOCACY



GAMIAN-Europe works hard to provide European and national level policy makers with the expertise, experience and expectations gathered from people affected by mental health problems.

During 2018 – 2019, we will continue to keep decision makers well informed regarding the latest trends and developments in the field.

Actions

European Action Plan on Mental Health. GAMIAN-Europe has prepared a concrete outline for an EU-level [Action Plan](#) on Mental Health. This is already being used to advocate for concrete and specific EU and national level action on mental health. This is crucial as the EU funded [Joint Action on Mental Health](#) and the [Mental Health Compass](#) have now come to a close and no specific EU level action on mental health is foreseen. The main aim of GAMIAN-Europe's Action Plan is to stimulate the development of national level mental health plans.

EU Research and Development Framework Programme 9: GAMIAN-Europe is closely monitoring the development of the future EU R&D Programme, following Horizon2020. We contributed to a recent EU-wide stakeholder consultation, underlining the need for the next Programme to have a stronger mental health focus and urging the Commission to implement the ROAMER (A Roadmap for Mental Health Research in Europe) [project findings](#) and recommendations.





European Parliament Interest Group on Mental Health, Well-being and Brain Disorders: GAMIAN-Europe will continue to act as the coordinator and Secretariat of the Interest Group on Mental Health, Well-being and Brain Disorders, organising three meetings per year, focusing on our priority areas, areas of specific interest of our members and supporters and relevant EU policy development. During 2018 - 2019, we are planning to address major depressive disorders, mental health at the workplace, mental health and sexual health, empowerment and self-management of care, Framework Programme 9 and others. During 2019, activities will also focus on the European elections (we will aim to ensure that elected MEPs are aware of the Interest Group and the need to address mental health issues) and re-establishing the Interest Group afterward.



Workshops. Apart from the Interest Group meetings, GAMIAN-Europe is planning to organise special expert workshops intended to gather stakeholder views and to advance knowledge on multiple mental health issues. This year GAMIAN-Europe will hold an expert workshop on patient empowerment and self-management of treatment and care, feeding into a comprehensive Call for Action, which is to be endorsed by our member organisations and other relevant EU and national level (mental) health stakeholders.

We are open to suggestions for similar initiatives.

EDUCATION AND AWARENESS RAISING

GAMIAN-Europe aims to raise awareness of mental health in order to change the societal and social perception of mental health. Many of our activities focus on improving the understanding of mental health problems, working to ensure and improve the availability, accessibility and relevance of information for all mental health problems. In these activities, we target patients, carers, health professionals as well as the general public, which in turn supports empowerment of patients and helps combating prejudice and ignorance.

Actions

Workshops. GAMIAN-Europe uses workshops as a means to raise awareness through the presentation of studies, discussions and calls for action. Among other issues, in 2018 – 2019, we would like to initiate a discussion on male suicide linked to depression. Stigmatisation of mental health problems including suicide discourages patients from seeking the help and support they need. Therefore, we intend to raise awareness of the magnitude of this issue and related stigma.

Companion Guides. We have already produced 'by patients for patients' educational guides containing practical advice on how to manage situations that commonly arise as well as a number of practical tools to support daily living of people with mental health problems, their family and friends.

In 2018 – 2019 we plan to produce a Depression Companion Guide. This booklet will highlight relevant and current information with respect to depression, e.g. types of depression, possible causes, how to support a person affected by depression and how to self-manage the condition. The objective is to translate the complex terminology usually contained in medical guides into accessible language in order to facilitate the understanding of people affected by the condition and to support its self-management.

Following the success of the guide in the area of schizophrenia, GAMIAN-Europe proposes to launch a second Schizophrenia Companion Guide. This will focus on continuity of care. Since the guide has proved to be an excellent tool to educate patients, carers and practitioners, we wish to carry out further research on the prevention, early detection, and follow-up of schizophrenia treatment.



EU-funded research projects. GAMIAN-Europe is also committed to strengthen patient input and participation in EU-funded research projects. Currently we are taking part in three European projects: Mood FOOD (1), ImpleMentAll (2) and CAPICE (3), where we have a strong role in the dissemination of the projects' findings. We have been invited to participate in several other projects, which are still at proposal stage (if successful, these will start in 2019).



Speaking at conferences. We are increasingly invited to speak at conferences; this helps to raise awareness of issues that are important to patients in events such as the Congresses of the European Psychiatric Association (EPA), World Psychiatric Association (WPA) and events of scientific associations dedicated to the science and treatment of disorders of the brain (e.g. EBC, ECNP).



Surveys. To capture a change in the patient's perceptions about the society's attitudes of mental health problems, we are planning to carry out a third survey on stigma and discrimination among GAMIAN-Europe members.

Communication. GAMIAN-Europe believes that external as much as internal communication are of the utmost importance to raise awareness of our activities and achievements. For that purpose, we will continue publishing a quarterly newsletter, maintain our (renewed) website and have an active presence on the social media (FB, Twitter).

(1) MooDFOOD is a multi-country collaborative project on the role of diet, food-related behaviour, and obesity in the prevention of depression. To read more:

<https://www.gamian.eu/project-category/moodfood/>

(2) ImpleMentAll is a European collaboration towards faster and more effective implementation of eHealth interventions. To read more: <https://www.gamian.eu/project-category/implementall/>

(3) For CAPICE, Childhood and Adolescence Psychopathology: this aims to unravel the complex aetiology in child and adolescent mental health symptoms. To read more: <https://www.capice-project.eu/index.php/project>

CAPACITY BUILDING, MEMBERSHIP AND PARTNERSHIP



While GAMIAN-Europe currently enjoys a representative membership base, which strengthens our credibility and access to up to date information on all levels, we aim to expand. We want to reach a Europe-wide membership, covering at least all EU Member States and all mental health conditions and support our members in their activities as well as facilitate exchange of good practice, experience and knowledge.

Actions

Annual Convention. GAMIAN-Europe's Annual Convention, serving as a vital element and tool for the cohesion and representation of the organisation, gathers members to share their expertise and collect input in GAMIAN-Europe's strategy and activities. In 2018, the Annual Convention will focus on depression.



Regional Seminars. Another occasion for members to meet, exchange and share information and experiences are provided by our regional seminars, i.e. smaller-scale events aimed at advancing knowledge on specific topics.



Partnerships. We are already collaborating with many other relevant stakeholders in the field of mental health, such as the European Federation of Associations of Families of People with Mental Illness (EUFAMI), European Brain Council (EBC), European Psychiatric Association (EPA), European Patients' Forum (EPF), European Union Medical Specialists (UEMS), International Alliance of Patients' Organizations (IAPO), Expert Platform on Mental Health -Focus on Depression, European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries (EFPIA) and the European Medicines Agency (EMA).

This collaboration will be continued and strengthened as this will help amplify the voice of patients.



THE VOICE OF PATIENTS IN MENTAL HEALTH

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