



MENTAL HEALTH  
KEEP TALKING ABOUT IT

## Newsletter GAMIAN-Europe

July 2015

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### Foreword

by Pedro Montellano, President

Dear reader,

The first 6 months of this year have been very busy with many important conferences and other events taking place in Europe. While all of these were worthwhile, interesting and providing GAMIAN-Europe with the opportunity to make its voice heard, I would like to highlight one major event, marking the conclusion of the EU Joint Action of Mental Health and Wellbeing (JAMHW). This initiative was launched over 2,5 years ago and brought together representatives of all relevant stakeholder groups, including 27 EU Member States and 12 European Associations. The JAMHW addressed a broad range of topics, ranging from mental health promotion in schools and in the workplace, promoting action against depression and suicide, development of community mental health care and integration of mental health in all policies.

GAMIAN-Europe participated actively in a variety of the work streams (e.g. mental health in the community) in order to ensure the Joint Action took account of the patient's perspective domains. Each Work Package leader prepared a report, based on a comprehensive analysis of the situation

in their respective area, and proposed recommendations for action. At the concluding event, these reports were discussed with all participants and the final version was reached by consensus. A significant number of recommendations were proposed in each of the work streams, as a result of the extensive work carried out and the perceived gap between the desired and the actual situation.

The main challenge now is how to ensure that these recommendations are put into action. It may not be the best way forward to try and implement all recommendations at the same time.

Choices will have to be made in that respect and these choices have to be agreed by patients' representatives, doctors, nurses, social assistants, policy makers and other relevant stakeholders, working together. The implementation will require collaborative work in order to make the best use of resources available, that often are scarce and improving the quality of the outcomes while contributing for the sustainability of the health care systems.

**I'm very hopeful that with the efforts of all we will build a better mental Health in Europe.**

### In this issue

Foreword by the president	1
Upcoming & past events	2
EU News	3
Interview with : <i>Jacinta Hastings Board Member</i>	4
Focus on <i>Ups en Downs vzw</i>	4-5
GAMIAN-Europe's News Flash	5



## Upcoming Events

### 6th EPHA Annual Conference

(European Public Health Alliance)

Brussels

**2-3 September 2015.**

*"Towards a European Union for Health - From Health in All Policies to EU Governance for Health and Well-Being?"*

The Alliance has presented itself for the first time to a selected group of stakeholders on the European level at the meeting of the Joint Action on Mental Health and Well-being (Helsinki, May 12th 2015). For a wider audience, the Alliance will organize a launch event at the annual conference.

### GAMIAN-Europe's ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Brussels (VanderValk Hotel Diegem)

**Saturday 19 September 2015**

**On Saturday, September 19<sup>th</sup>**, the General Assembly of Gamian-Europe will be held in Brussels, VanderValk Hotel, Airport, Diegem. (free shuttle from the airport to the hotel)

For agenda and proxy form., send request to [assistant@gamian.eu](mailto:assistant@gamian.eu). You can add items to the agenda. Please send them in before August 31<sup>st</sup>, [info@gamian.eu](mailto:info@gamian.eu)

Click here to go to the [registration form](#).

All documents and the final agenda will be sent on August 10th.

In the evening of the 19<sup>th</sup> September, all members are invited to the dinner and the award giving ceremony, at 20:00 in the VanderValk hotel. Please send in applications for this award (all info and application form on the [Gamian-Europe website](#)) before 1<sup>st</sup> of September.

**On Friday September 18<sup>th</sup>** : (afternoon (16:00- 18:00), an "ad hoc commission" will take place to discuss the subject of the Executive Director job description.

The board meeting is scheduled **on Sunday September:20<sup>th</sup>** ,

**Already registered ? Having used the website form ?**

**The deadline was July, 15<sup>th</sup> !!!**

Looking forward to see you all in Brussels

### Capacity-Building

Brussels

**21- 23 September 2015**

Programme: Launch of applications for the Training on Communication (organized by European Patients' Forum (EPF)

More info [here](#).



### World Mental Health Day

(Dignity in mental health)

**10 October 2015**

Thousands of people with mental health conditions around the world continue to be deprived of their dignity and human rights as a consequence of the stigma and lack of care or poor quality of care. Raising awareness about mental health and promoting rights and high-quality care are central to WHO's role in ensuring that people with mental health conditions live a dignified life.

[Read more](#)

## Past Events

### EU regional MHiAP Conference

(Mental Health in all Policies)

Helsinki.

11-12 May 2015

Mental health is a necessary prerequisite for European societies to flourish. The social and economic sustainability of European societies requires effective promotion of mental health and prevention of mental ill-health. This is especially compelling within the context of the current economic crisis. You want to receive the document with conference conclusions ? mail to: [assistant@gamian.eu](mailto:assistant@gamian.eu). For further information on good practices and sector-specific policy recommendations on MHiAP, click [here](#).

### Rencontre Franco-Hellénique

à Athenes

**20 May 2015**

(Initiative novatrice d'intégration sociale pour et par des personnes souffrant de troubles psychiques)

An event from KINAPSI was held two months ago in Athens to share best practices. A social club of Mental Health Users from Paris have visited Athens and exchanged best Practices from France.

### Patient and Consumers Working Party of

EMA (European Medicines Agency)

London.

**3 June 2015**

Topic groups were created for the working methods. such as: Measure impact of patient involvement, Acknowledge and promote visibility of patient input in the Agency's activities, **Training (GAMIAN-Europe will be member)**, Social Media, Involvement of young people / children.



## Patient Summit 2015

*Copenhagen.*

*25/26 June 2015*

Gamian-Europe members Daniel Czernik (Czech Rep) and Spyros Zorbas (Greece) were present and before the summit, our executive director, Paul Arteel, had a meeting with Lundbeck on future collaboration with a first result of Lundbeck printing the material for GAMIAN-Europe's stand at the ECNP congress in Amsterdam (end of August)

more info on [#patientsummitCPH2015](#)

## EU News



by Christine Marking (GAMIAN-Europe EU Liaison)

### European Parliament Interest Group on Mental Health, Well-being and Brain Disorders

*"Meeting the need for improved treatment of brain disorders"*

*Brussels, 2 June 2015*

The European Parliament Interest Group on Mental Health, Well-being and Brain Disorders and the Global Alliance of Mental Illness



Advocacy Networks (GAMIAN-Europe), organised a meeting addressing the unmet need for improved treatment of brain diseases. The meeting was held on 2 June between 13.00 and 15.30 and was organised in co-operation with the European Brain Council.

Background to the meeting was the fact that Central Nervous System (CNS) diseases, and in particular, mental health disorders, are the unrecognised health challenge of the 21st century. Currently, at least 25% of the global population will be confronted with a mental health disorder, with up to 700 million people living with a mental health disorder in 2010. The estimated global economic cost of mental health disorders for 2010 was approximately \$2.5 trillion, with a projected cost for 2030 of \$6 trillion.

More info, see [our website](#)

### "Let's defeat Depression"

People with depression are twice as likely to lose their jobs, and are at much higher risk of poverty, write 12 MEP Ambassadors Against Depression.

*The European Depression*

*Association (EDA) is an alliance of organisations, patients, researchers and healthcare professionals from 19 countries across Europe.....As MEP Ambassadors Against Depression, they have decided to work collaboratively across party lines and take the lead in tackling the hidden depression pandemic which*

is truly disabling our societies. Working with the European Depression Association, they have committed to taking every opportunity available to us to support the 30 million Europeans affected by depression, raising awareness of the clear and present threat that depression presents to our citizens and society. More info, click [here](#)

### Physical activity as medicine for mental illness

A new report on physical activity in Europe underlines the positive impact of exercise for the body and the mind.

Full report, see [SPECIAL REPORT](#)

A report by the Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR), published on Wednesday (18 June), points to various studies suggesting that physical activity can prevent mental illness, such as stress, anxiety and depression.



Getting citizens to exercise is a cost-effective way of reducing healthcare spending and makes workers more productive and efficient at work, says the report commissioned by the International Sport and Culture Association (ISCA).

In the European region, mental illness affects one in four people at some stage of their life, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO). It is estimated that 83 million people are currently affected by mental health problems across the region. 33.2% of women and 21.7% of men suffer from mental illnesses, according to the WHO. For all details: [The report](#)

### European Alliance on Mental Health in All Policies Action plan 2015 – 2016

In 2013, a few organisations started an initiative to set the mental health of the working population on the European agenda. Two years later, the initiative has led to a dynamic of joint interests and actions in a European Alliance for Mental Health in all Policies. Partners in the Alliance emphasize the value of good mental health for the society, economy and individuals and have the ambition to incorporate these insights in their own policies and actions. The partners now focus on mental health at schools, the workplace and in relation to employability as these are areas in which still much progress needs to be made.

For the next two years, the Alliance partners will work together on different actions to improve the current situation on mental health in Europe. For more details, mail to: [assistant@gamian.eu](mailto:assistant@gamian.eu)

**Next Interest Group on Mental Health : Joint meeting with Brain Mind and Pain Interest Group on **October, 14th "Stigma"****

## Interview with *Jacinta Hastings* Member of GAMIAN-Europe's board

Jacinta Hastings has been the Chief Executive Officer of Bodywhys (the Eating Disorders Association of Ireland) since 2007. Prior to that she worked in a senior capacity with Mental Health Ireland and was involved in a number of European projects co-ordinated by Mental Health Europe.

Jacinta has contributed to the development, implementation and monitoring of strategic plans and is currently involved in lobbying, campaigning and advocating for eating disorders and mental health service improvement and the implementation of the relevant recommendations of the national policy 'A Vision for Change'.

Advocating for user involvement and a recovery based approach to mental health provision is a strong focus of current campaigning. In addition to her work in Bodywhys, Jacinta is a Director of Mental Health Reform and is a member of the Institute of Directors of Ireland (IoD) and of Rotary International. She holds qualifications in Health and Social Studies; Communications; Youth Health Promotion; and a BA in Humanities; MA in Humanities, as well as a Post Grad qualification in Management.

Jacinta brings NGO support service expertise to the Board and is particularly experienced and skilled in all aspects of governance.

**We interviewed Jacinta to discover a bit more about her and her role within GAMIAN-Europe.**

***When and how did your career in the area of "mental health care" start ?***

I started my career in the area of the statutory and voluntary health, social care and mental health sectors in the late 1970s and joined GAMIAN-Europe as an individual member and as a Board member in 2013.

***What is for you the most important experience so far as a board member of GAMIAN-Europe ?***

Since becoming involved in GAMIAN-Europe, first as a member, and then as a board member, I can honestly say, that every engagement has been both a humbling and an enriching experience. Every personal story, which is shared so openly and generously, gives encouragement, hope and strength to all of us in a significant and meaningful way. Every individual's journey is unique and is the very foundation on which GAMIAN-Europe was founded.

***Can you explain a bit about the current/future policy on the Mental Health care services in Ireland ?***

Regarding the government policy in my country, the Department of Health and Children in Ireland (DOHC) has primary responsibility for the development of health policy, including policy in respect of mental health.

In 2006, the DOHC published "A Vision for Change" – the government's key policy framework for mental health in Ireland.

In a nutshell, the key principles of "A Vision for Change (AVFC) are :

- ✦ a framework for building and fostering positive mental health across the entire community and for providing accessible, community-based, specialist services for people with mental health problems.
- ✦ Combination of the expertise of different professional disciplines, health service managers, researchers, representatives of voluntary organisations, and service user groups to develop this policy.
- ✦ a holistic view of mental health and recommendations for an integrated, multi-disciplinary approach to addressing the biological, psychological and social factors that contribute to mental health problems. It proposes a person-centred treatment approach.
- ✦ Special emphasis to the need to involve service users and their families and carers at every level of service provision.
- ✦ a transfer of resources from hospital and institutional services to community services and recommends that 8.4% of the overall health budget is dedicated to mental health services to achieve full implementation.



SUPPORTING PEOPLE AFFECTED BY EATING DISORDERS SINCE 1995



***What message do you, as a member of GAMIAN-Europe's board, have for the member organisations and readers of this newsletter?***

As a membership organisation, we are a stronger voice together and together we can make that voice heard to achieve the aims and objectives of GAMIAN-Europe through a range of projects and activities across Europe.

## FOCUS ON..



Ups & Downs

(U&D) is a self care organisation for people suffering from bipolar disorder and chronic depression. The organisation supports both patients and their family members in coping with these illnesses.



**Self-help meetings** take place monthly in regional groups in Flanders (the Flemish speaking part of Belgium). During these meetings, both information on bipolar disorder and depression is exchanged and participants have the opportunity to share their experiences. The combination of information and personal exchanges makes the working of the Ups & Downs groups very unique. For the moment, there exist nine groups in various cities of Flanders and about twenty active volunteers are working for U&D all over Flanders.

## Funding

U&D gets practically no financial support from the Flemish or Belgian government and has no funds to employ professional

staff members. The organisation can run mostly thanks to funding by the Flemish Department of Welfare supporting us as a volunteer organisation. Some sponsorship from charities such as Lions Club, and from pharmaceutical companies such as Lundbeck and Pfizer adds financial means for the operation of U&D. Due to the strict ethical regulations in Europe these pharmaceuticals companies do not in any way influence our work. They fund the organisation and in return they are mentioned on the website and in the 'Ups & Downs Newsletters'.

### Volunteers

In view of this sponsorship U&D manages to maintain its autonomy, and runs completely by the help of (ex) patients and family members. This is its strength but also its weakness. Some of the volunteers can be out of the running with a possible relapse. Often the volunteers help people with listening to them and giving them first hand advice from own personal experience. It is not the purpose of giving any psychotherapy or to interfere with prescribed medication. In some cases, there is reference to professionals, such as GP, psychiatrist or psychologist.

### Collaboration with professionals

U&D collaborates well with professionals in asking them to be guest speakers in the regional selfcare groups or at seminars. Many professionals consider U&D as a useful addition to their own therapy. From time to time, members of U&D give lectures in schools, mental health centres, as well as educational sessions in psychiatric hospitals.

### Partners

Ups & Downs has started its work in 1995. During the past 20 years of activities, collaboration with many partner organisations in Belgium has been established. The long lasting stable collaborations with partner organisations reinforce the believe and conviction that U&D is slowly becoming an important partner within the Belgian Mental health care.

### 20 YEARS ANNIVERSARY



In 2015, U&D will celebrate its 20 years anniversary as it has been founded in 1995. To celebrate this event, a special festive edition of their annual seminar, will take place on October, 10<sup>th</sup> in Ghent. Professional and 'experts-by-experience' have been invited to give lectures. The Ups & Downs award for good practice will be presented at the end of this conference.

U&D hopes to bring together up to 200 people on this day. Patients, family members, professionals and all partner organisations are welcome to participate and celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of U&D.

For more details,

[www.upsendowns.be](http://www.upsendowns.be)

[www.facebook.com/upsendowns.be](https://www.facebook.com/upsendowns.be)

[contact@upsendowns.be](mailto:contact@upsendowns.be)

## GAMIAN-Europe's News Flash



**Savez-vous vraiment ce que c'est que la dépression ?**

**Ce chien noir va rendre les choses beaucoup plus claires pour vous...**

*(Do you really know what is a depression?... This black dog will tell you in a comprehensive way.*

[Click here](#)

via [France-Dépression](#)

### Mental Health Atlas (WHO)

Keeping in mind the principle "what gets measured, gets done", WHO recently updated its Mental Health Atlas. This new edition offers core indicators for critical areas of mental health system development. These are: governance and financing, human resources, service availability and delivery, promotion and prevention, and surveillance.

A key repository of mental health information from WHO Member States, the Mental Health Atlas provides baseline data to measure progress towards the objectives and targets of the Comprehensive Mental Health Action Plan 2013–2020. [Read more](#)

### What about mental health in Greece nowadays ?

Read more in these articles :

[When economic instability turns deadly... In Greece, there's a link between a weakened economy and mental health.](#)

[Effect of Greece's Economic Crisis on Public Health](#)

[Why Greece's financial crisis is a health crisis too](#)

### A Precision Medicine Approach to Antidepressant Treatment in Depression

Antidepressants are widely prescribed to treat depression but take 4-6 weeks to exert their effects. Further, most patients do not respond to the first drug they are prescribed and therefore have to try several different drugs, in successive 4-6 week cycles, before an effective treatment is found. Based on many years of research, P1vital developed the Primary Care P1vital® Oxford Emotional Test Battery (PC-ETB), an easy to use, low cost, computerised test which can detect response to antidepressant treatment within 7 days. After a successful pilot study in UK, an European study is planned. For more info, [info@p1vital.com](mailto:info@p1vital.com) or directly to Colin T Dourish, [cdourish@p1vital.com](mailto:cdourish@p1vital.com)

### LEARN....

What are Mental Disorders? What is Brain Injury? What is Stigma? We need to know as much about our minds as we do our bodies. Have a look at the videos on YouTube channel

[More info](#)