

# What is schizophrenia?

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# What is schizophrenia?

- A mental illness characterized by disturbances of thought processes, disrupted perceptions and diminished or exaggerated emotional responses
- ≥ 26 million people affected worldwide<sup>1</sup>
- Can affect an individual's mood and behaviour and psychosocial functioning

## Positive 'psychotic' symptoms

**Delusions:** strongly held unfounded beliefs

**Hallucinations:** most commonly auditory

**Disorganized speech:** disjointed, incoherent speech

**Grossly disorganized or catatonic behaviour:** unusual behaviour and psychomotor disturbances

## Negative symptoms

**Expressive deficits:** including lack of emotional expression

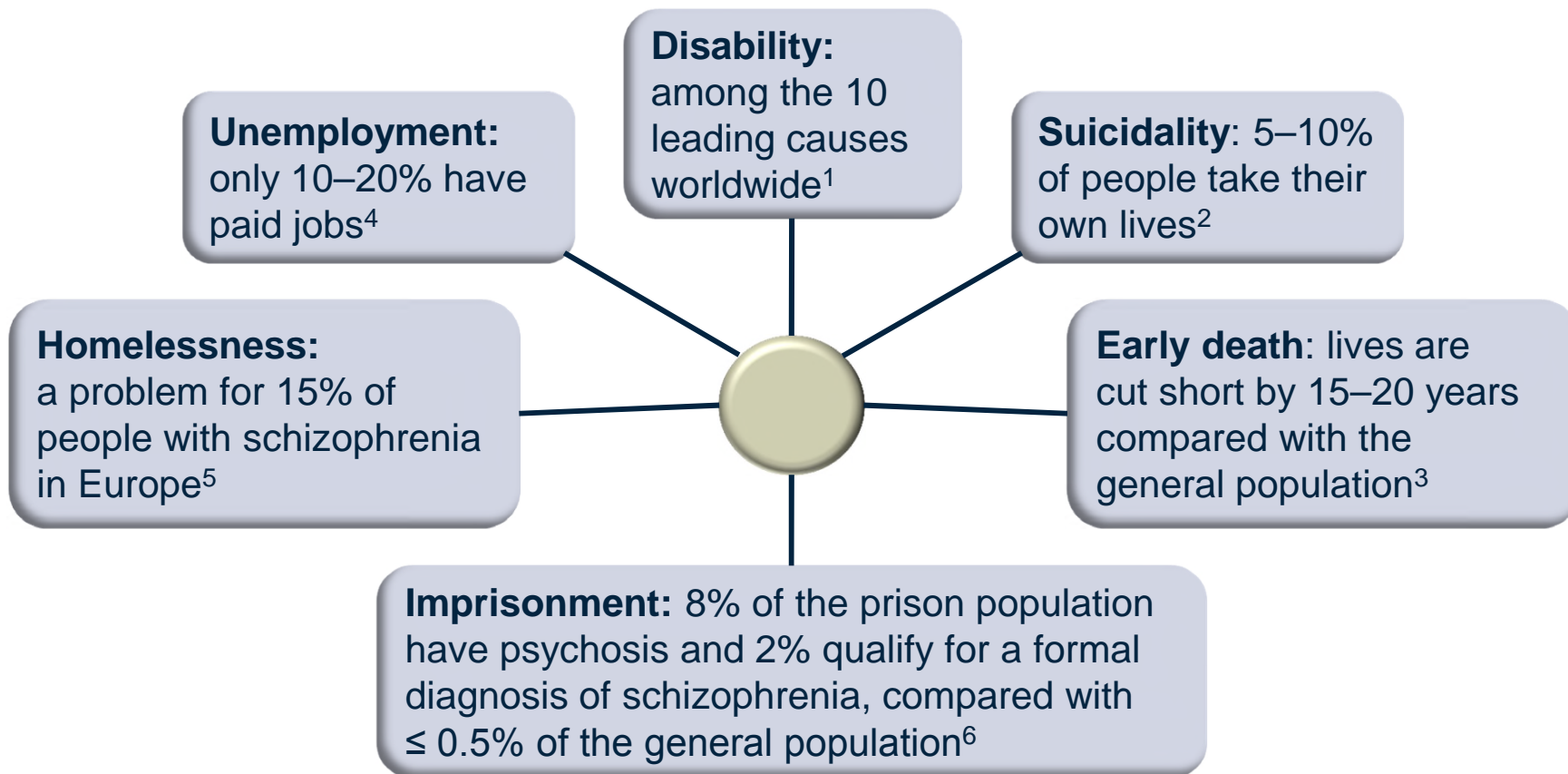
**Alogia:** reduced amount and content of speech

**Avolition:** lack of drive and interest in everyday activities

## Cognitive impairment

- Poor concentration and memory
- Impaired ability to plan and execute activities

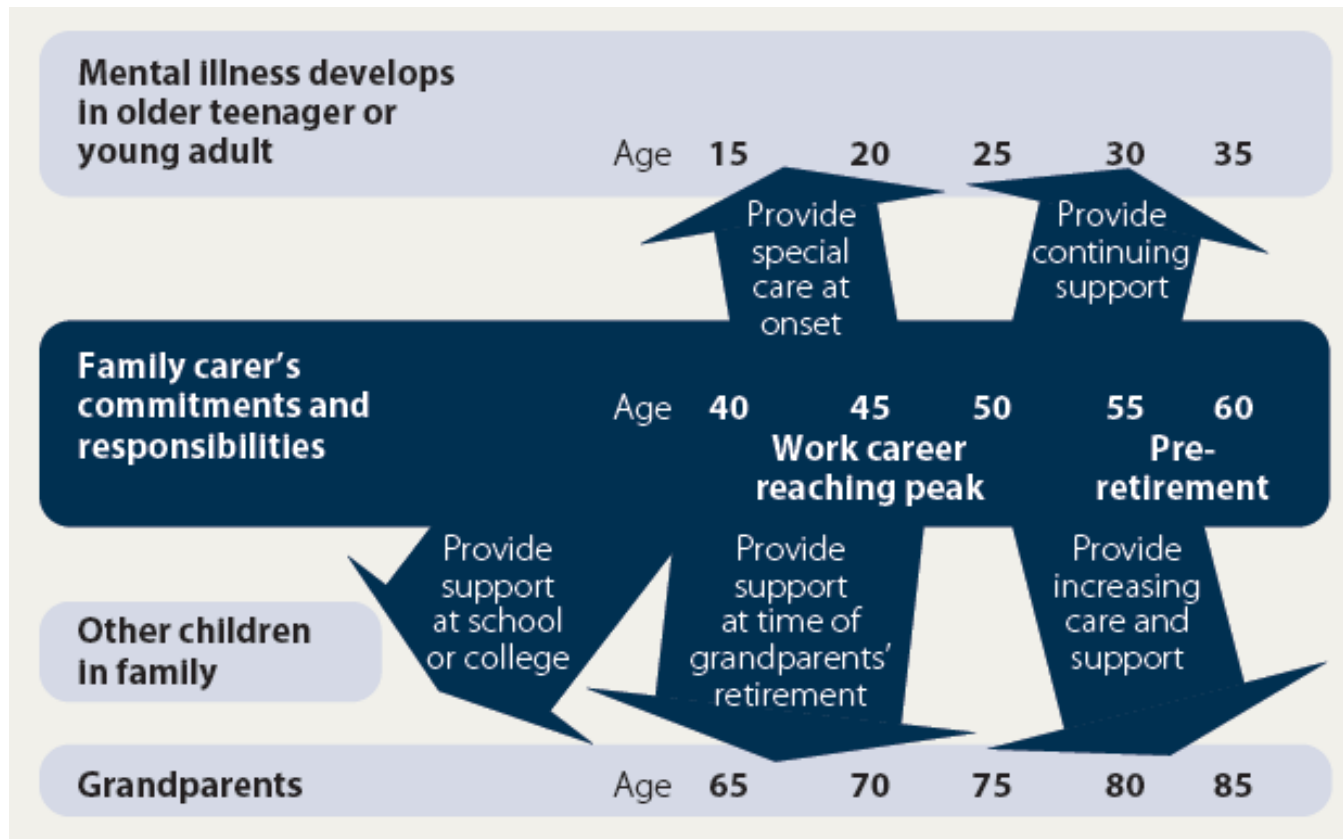
# Psychosocial consequences



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 2. Hor K, Taylor M. *J Psychopharmacol* 2010;24:81–90; 3. Thornicroft G. *Br J Psychiatry* 2011;199:441–2; 4. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Available from: <http://www.oecd.org/health/theoecdmentalhealthandworkproject.htm>; 5. Bebbington PE *et al. Soc Psychiatry Psychiatr Epidemiol* 2005;40:707–17;  
 6. Andrew A *et al.* Available from: <http://www2.lse.ac.uk/LSEHealthAndSocialCare/pdf/LSE-economic-report-FINAL-12-Nov.pdf>

# Impact of schizophrenia on family

- At the age of onset of a child's mental illness, a range of commitments and responsibilities can combine to create great family stress



# **Schizophrenia: Time to Commit to Policy Change**

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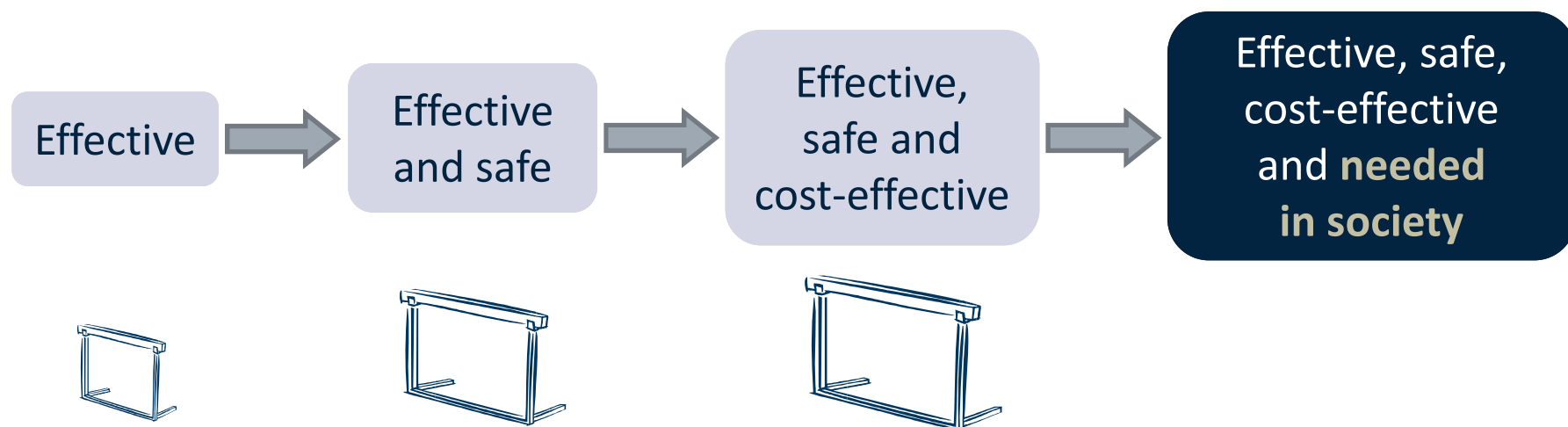
# Acknowledgements

**TIME TO  
COMMIT TO  
POLICY  
CHANGE**

- **Authored** by international experts, including psychiatrists, researchers, policy advisers, nurses, patients, carers and advocacy groups
- **Led by Professor Wolfgang Fleischhacker**, Innsbruck, Austria
- **Endorsed** by nine professional associations and patient groups, including:
  - European Brain Council
  - European Federation of Associations of Families of People with Mental Illness
  - Global Alliance of Mental Illness Advocacy Networks
  - Royal College of Psychiatrists (UK)
  - World Federation of Mental Health
- More than ten **additional endorsements** requested ... pending!
- **Funded** by an educational grant from F. Hoffmann-La Roche
- **Writing and editing support** by Oxford PharmaGenesis™ Ltd

# Why do we need a policy report?

- Rising public expectations
  - Increasing life expectancy and continuing high quality of life
- Bringing new treatments to the world in areas of unmet medical need is no longer just about doing research





# The challenge

- Medication is just one part of changing the lives of people with schizophrenia
- Many patients still experience:
  - social isolation
  - unemployment
  - homelessness or imprisonment
  - poor quality of life
  - premature death and suicide
  - prejudice and discrimination
- **Society** as a whole faces these issues ...
  - ... not just people with schizophrenia and their carers
- **Healthcare policy needs to change**

# Policy recommendations (1)

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1. Provide an evidence-based, **integrated care package** for people with schizophrenia that addresses their mental and physical health needs. This should be underpinned with an integrated approach by their healthcare professionals and supported by the national healthcare system and by educational and research facilities



2. Provide support for people with schizophrenia **to enter and to remain in their community**, and develop mechanisms to help guide them through the often complex benefit and employment systems **to enhance recovery**



# Policy recommendations (2)

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3. Provide concrete **support, information** and **educational programmes** to families and carers on how to enhance care for an individual living with schizophrenia in a manner that entails minimal disruption to their own personal lives



4. Consult with healthcare professionals and other stakeholders directly involved in the management of schizophrenia, in order to **regularly revise, update and improve policy** on the management of schizophrenia



# Policy recommendations (3)

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5. Provide support, which is proportionate to the impact of the disease, for **research and development of new treatments** that improve the overall outlook for people with schizophrenia, including those that target negative symptoms and cognitive impairment



6. Establish adequately funded, ongoing and **regular awareness-raising campaigns** to: increase the understanding of schizophrenia and emphasize the importance of positive societal attitudes towards mental illnesses



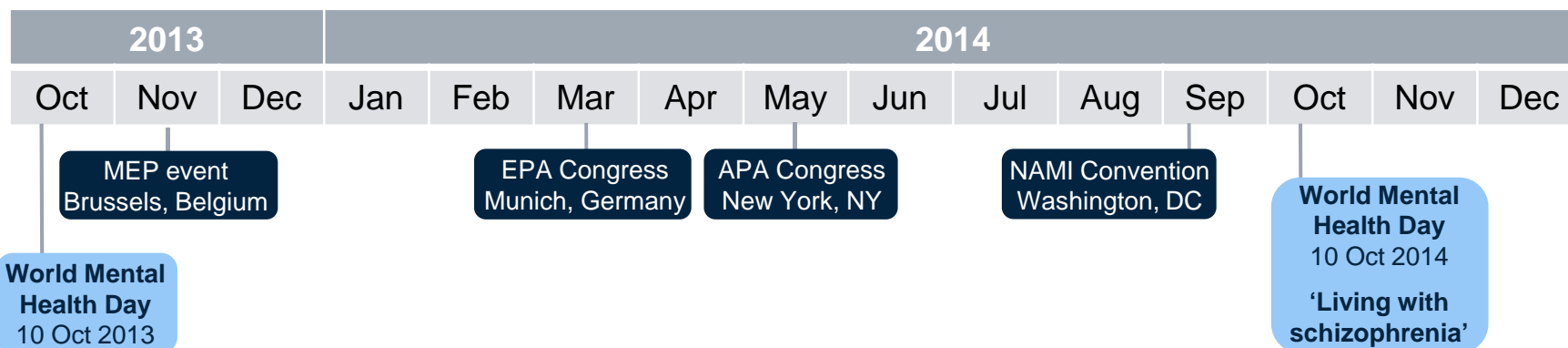
# Reaching different audiences

- Communicate our message to as wide an audience as possible for maximum impact
  - Politicians
  - Patients, advocates and caregivers
  - Healthcare professionals
  - Payers
- Seize publicity opportunities throughout 2014
- Create awareness and drive policy change
- Target local, regional and national stakeholders globally



# Wide range of activities to come

- European Parliament Interest Group on Mental Health
- Short reports for specific audiences
  - Translated into major European languages
- Scientific symposia proposals (EPA, APA)
- Slide kits
- Journal features
- Awareness-raising activities led by advocacy groups (NAMI, GAMIAN, EBC)



# Take-home message

**TIME TO  
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- **Better lives for people living with schizophrenia are a realistic goal**
- **Much is still to be done, but we need:**
  - an integrated team approach
  - collaboration with people with schizophrenia, their families and other sources of support
  - adequate funding
  - engagement by every stakeholder: policy makers at every level, clinicians and public agencies
- **With commitment from all, change can be achieved**

# Next steps?

- Comments, questions and recommendations from this group are highly welcome