



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION  
ORGANISATION MONDIALE DE LA SANTÉ  
WELTGESUNDHEITSORGANISATION  
ВСЕМИРНАЯ ОРГАНИЗАЦИЯ ЗДРАВООХРАНЕНИЯ

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR EUROPE  
BUREAU RÉGIONAL DE L'EUROPE  
REGIONALBÜRO FÜR EUROPA  
ЕВРОПЕЙСКОЕ РЕГИОНАЛЬНОЕ БЮРО

Our reference: MFEM  
Notre référence: jke  
Unser Zeichen: EC Green Paper  
См. наш номер:

Your reference:  
Votre référence:  
Ihr Zeichen:  
На Ваш номер:

Dear Markos,

It is with great pleasure that I am writing to you in response to the call for comments on the Green Paper for Mental Health. We were delighted when the Green Paper was launched, and I still very much regret I was not personally able to congratulate you on that occasion due to unforeseen circumstances. We strongly support the actions and initiatives mentioned, which are also very much in the spirit of the WHO Mental Health Declaration and Action Plan for Europe.

The WHO Regional Office for Europe is of course strongly committed to the mental wellbeing of the people in our member states, as was demonstrated by the Ministerial Conference in Helsinki which was jointly organized with the European Commission and the Council of Europe. We were grateful you addressed the audience and stated the priority given to this area by you personally.

The key message of the Declaration was the need to integrate policies across government to improve the wellbeing of the population, prevent mental disorders in vulnerable groups and develop comprehensive and integrated care and social inclusion for people suffering from mental health problems. At the Ministerial conference you mentioned the tragedy of the high suicide rate in the European Union as well as the larger European Region of the WHO. The Green Paper, whilst firmly stating its own position, also builds on common ground.

It sends a powerful signal that we are working towards common ends. Areas addressed in both the WHO Declaration and the Green Paper are the very high burden of disease attributable to depression leading to severe personal suffering and economic loss to society as a whole, the concern about the deteriorating mental health of our children and the consequences of an aging population, and the stigma and discrimination affecting the dignity of people with mental health problems, still too often resulting in inhumane and degrading care in institutions.

We support therefore the proposed actions and priorities identified in the Green Paper, which are based on the current evidence, are supportive and complementary to those proposed in the WHO Action Plan on Mental Health, and provide a comprehensive approach to the 4 actions prioritised in the Green Paper: promotion of mental health, prevention of mental disorders, improvement of quality of life and protecting human rights and dignity of people with mental health problems and a developed mental health information, research and knowledge system for the EU.

**ACTION**

Date: 30 May 2006

DG SANCO n A/9810									
14.06.2006									
Deadline:									
File:									
DG	DDG	01	02	A	B	<b>C</b>	D	E	F

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INFO	ACTION
ADMINISTRATION	
ADDICTION	
16 JUN 2006	
POSITIVE HEALTH	
SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL	
SANCO/C/4	

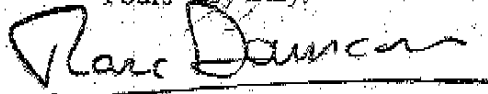
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**WHO Regional Office for Europe**

It has been appreciated by our member states that we are acting in consort on these issues which are of great concern in many countries. I welcome the partnership that has developed between our organizations in this area, working constructively together to deliver policies and encourage good practice within our respective competences.

In conclusion, the WHO Regional Office for Europe welcomes the initiative of the European Commission to launch the Green Paper and the related open consultation process. It fully supports the development of a EU Strategy for Mental Health, and looks forward to continuing the close collaboration with the European Commission in the development and implementation of mental health action across Europe.

Yours very truly,



Marc Danzon, M.D.  
Regional Director

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