



SLOVENIA
LIFE QUALITY
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

To whom it might concern!

OZARA proposals on the Green Paper on Mental Health

- In the annex of the Green Paper data for Slovenia (data on financial expenses for the field of mental health, number of psychiatric beds) except the data about suicidal index is not included. We suggest defining the responsible person for mediation of data as soon as possible.
- Clearly emphasise the need to transfer the care that is mostly in the domain of health care to other fields. It is important that all equally co-operate with a view to greater reconciliation of steps (Green Paper, 2005, step 6.2 and research "Included in Society"). It is necessary to emphasise that truly effective rehabilitation can be executed only inside the community but not in artificial environments, behind the walls of big institutions.
- It is necessary to clearly define who (beside health care professionals) are professionals on the field of mental health (EC report "State of Mental Health in EU and Maastricht Treaty, article 152). The EC Report »State of Mental Health in EU« (p.65) directs that the role of professional workers from other fields is very important and at the same time poorly defined.
- First preferential task of EC is to reduce the differences in the access to services (Green Paper, p. 5 and EC Report "State of Mental Health in EU, 2004, p. 65), especially for the most vulnerable target groups inside the population of people with difficulties in mental health (older people, disabled, migrants, drug users), which are not included in existing services (stated in EC Report "State of Mental Health in EU, 2004). It is necessary to encourage development of approach, that offer people services on their homes or in the working environment, like they already do in UK, Norway, Finland and Sweden or USA, Canada and Australia. Numerous researches showed that that kind of approach is most appropriate in rural or sparsely inhabited areas where a lack of appropriate services is shown and it also reduces the stigma that keeps people from getting help (Green Paper, p.11). With that kind of services it would be possible to prevent social exclusion and isolation, to improve degree of work inclusion and reduce the influence of stress in domestic and working environment (Green Paper, 2005, step 6.1, p.8).
- Encourage the programmes, which assure the right for independent and professional advocate for mentally ill people (especially in cases of forced hospitalisation).
- In order to encourage users and family members for active participation, to assume responsibility, for empowerment and for connecting in own associations it is necessary to develop educational programmes that are based on peer education (for example the programme Prospect, developed by EUFAMI).

- It is necessary to stress the need for encouraging the alternative community services because of the trend of decreasing the number of psychiatric beds. It is necessary to ensure appropriate legal, formal and economical conditions for alternative community programmes.
- Develop special (preventive) programmes to help children and adolescents of parents who are mentally ill (picture books and youth books, Similes, KOPP Project, Belgium)
- Clearly determine that the term "treatment" does not include only medicamental but also psychotherapeutical treatment, the combination of both brings the best possible results.
- Green Paper must take up the following point of view: all people with psychiatric disability must have access to newer, better medications with fewer side effects. The usage of older medications should be reduced.
- in the Green Paper and in the Action Plan it is necessary to define the key or formula for stable financing of Action Plan execution on the EU level and within the member states. Otherwise we will find ourselves in the situation where we will have a lot of good documents, but no financial sources for their execution. It would be reasonable to think about financing formula 50:50 (EU: member states) – especially for the prevention and informing the public about Mental Health which Action should be planned in long term and attended with generations monitoring.
- It would be reasonable to set up EU Directorate for Mental Health. Its tasks would be to reconcile the execution of the Action Plan on the field of mental health.
- NGOs on the field of Mental Health have a great role and the Green Paper gives them great significance. It is necessary that the EC determine that uniting of NGOs on the EU level is of great importance for the politics forming and for the implementation of this politics. It is necessary to assure financial means for organisation on the EU level, just like it is for example on the field of disabilities and consumer protection.

Proposals and remarks were formed together with users, family members and professionals active in the NGO Ozara Slovenia, Life Quality National Association.

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