

EACLPP PRIMARY CARE WORKING GROUP

What is the Primary Care Working Group?

The Primary Care Group of the EACLPP was set up with the aim of providing a forum for EACLPP members to exchange ideas, experiences, cooperation and set up collaborative projects in the area of Primary Health Care (PHC) research across Europe.

Why a Primary Care Working Group within the EACLPP?

The PHC setting has specific characteristics in terms of organization, delivery of care, casemix of patients, training; for instance, in the PHC setting the consultation time is generally brief and the pressure of generally busy waiting rooms prevents from the conduct of very indepth diagnostic assessments, which on contrary are feasible during hospital stay. Moreover, while CLP in the hospital setting can focus on more sophisticated issues of basic clinical research, covering issues of etiology, diagnosis and phenomenology, PHC has to give priority to the cost-effective management of patients with common mental disorders. For these reasons it was deemed to be important to set up a specific working group within the EACLPP devoted to the study of diagnostic and treatment issues related to mental health in PHC settings.

Who are the members of Primary Care Working Group?

The Primary Care Working Group will be officially set up at the Lausanne meeting (2006) and will include clinicians, scientists and mental health professionals who are members of the EACLPP and who have a specific research interest in the field of PHC. The WG should also include primary care colleagues; their contribution is necessary because models of cooperation between mental health and general practice are not clearly established and have to be discussed between the two groups of professionals.

EACLPP 2008 Zaragoza

In the last Zaragoza meeting we organized a symposium on models of working at interface between mental health and primary care where different experiences of different countries were presented. The session was stimulating and speakers mostly reported on collaborative care projects with primary care they have implemented in their countries. Projects were aimed at designing effective clinical collaboration models between primary and secondary care for the management of depression and other Common Mental Disorders. Projects were tailored to the specific needs of each country and to local organization of Primary Care and of Community Mental Health Services. The exchange of experiences and projects was very useful and stimulating. We discussed on local policies, resources restrictions, and research on cost-effectiveness of collaborative care. Colleagues from non European countries, where specialist services are less diffuse than in Europe stressed the importance of training PCPs.

Objectives of the PCWG

- 1) to recruit other colleagues who would like to join the WG, and in particular primary care physicans;
- 2) to assess the state of cooperation between primary care and CLP in different countries,
- 3) to list ongoing research projects between mental health and primary care.

The state of primary care – liaison psychiatry cooperation will be assess with a questionnaire. A short questionnaire has been prepared for participants to the group and any other EACLPP member interested in Primary Care Liaison Psychiatry. The form is complemented by a PCP section that members should propose to PCPs with whom they collaborate. The questionnaire focuses on organization of primary care, local policies on the management of CMDs in primary and secondary care and on existing collaborative care programs. The questionnaire was presented and discussed at a board meeting held in Amsterdam on March

2007. The final version of the questionnaire will be published on the EACLPP web site and we invite all interested members to give us their comment and possibly to fill it out.

Chairmen

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Other members

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Germany Albert Diefenbacher, Ronal Burian (Berlin), Kurt Fritzsche (Freiburg)

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