

family association member, two psychiatrists, a psychologist, and a school teacher.

The group has carried out a survey of the general population. They have also conducted a review of the image of mental illness as presented by the media, including a review of articles presented in the local newspaper in Brescia, in Northern Italy.

Based upon the research completed the group has selected journalists and students as the first two target audiences for their programme. Other target groups including those suffering from mental illness and their family members, business leaders and the clergy will be included in the programme later.

The presentation will give some of the results of the survey concerning attitudes to the mentally ill and experience from the programme applied in schools.

IS02.06

ANTI-STIGMATISATION PROGRAMME IN GREECE

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The programme in Greece has begun with the establishment of Programme Committees and a survey using a variety of knowledge-attitudinal interviews and questionnaires given to families with a member suffering from schizophrenia. This will be followed by a survey on knowledge, beliefs and attitudes of the other selected population groups such as mental health and media professionals, as well as patients.

Among the target groups at whom attitude change programmes will be aimed are:

- health care professionals
- the general public
- high school students
- families
- the clergy
- the police

The presentation will describe some of the results of this work as well as the results of an unwanted "natural" experience that followed the need to place mentally ill (until then residing in a hospital) into the community.

S29. Part II. Biomed collaborative studies in Europe: results and perspectives

Chairs: M. Maj (I), C.B. Pull (LUX)

S29.01

BIOMED-MEROPE PROJECT FOR ADULTS WITH PSYCHIATRIC DISORDERS AND MENTAL RETARDATION

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There is no systematic information on policy, planning and delivery of services for people with mental retardation and mental health needs in European Countries. The aims and objectives of the MEROPE project have been bringing together expertise, developing "best-practice" guidelines, information sharing on European services, development of shared diagnostic methods and improving staff awareness. This presentation will describe the strengths and weaknesses of services in five European countries: Austria, England, Greece, Ireland and Spain. Overall the needs of those with additional mental health needs have not been specifically addressed

at a national level, with the exception perhaps in England, although there are still gaps in services. The main characteristics are unclear policy, trends for legislation changes, increased prevalence of people with dual diagnosis, inadequate generic service provision, need for specialist services and training developments. Comparative data for standardised diagnosis of psychiatric disorders will be presented as well as the results of clinical effectiveness of staff training.

S29.02

A EUROPEAN TECHNOLOGY FOR COMPARING MENTAL HEALTH CARE SYSTEMS. ADAPTATION, VALIDATION AND APPLICATION IN A LARGE SAMPLE OF ITALIAN CATCHMENT AREAS

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Few instruments are available today for the standardised cross-national evaluation of different systems of psychiatric care; the European Psychiatric Care Assessment Team (EPCAT) has addressed this problem by developing an internationally valid technology for assessing scope, structure, levels of utilisation and content of mental health services offered to the population of a specific catchment area.

The resultant instruments, which have been developed and tested by experts from six European countries, are: 1. the European Socio-Demographic Schedule (ESDS); 2. the European Service Mapping Schedule (ESMS), and 3. the International Classification of Mental Health Care (ICMHC). After adjustment to the Italian context, these instruments were employed in a large service assessment survey involving the whole Piedmontese area as well as a representative sample of catchment areas in the remaining Italian regions.

Adequate degrees of feasibility, validity and reliability already emerged during the validation phase were confirmed by application of these three instruments.

THE PRELIMINARY DATA PRESENTED IN THIS PAPER CONFIRM THAT THE METHODOLOGY DEVELOPED BY THE EPCAT GROUP PERMITS AN ACCURATE ASSESSMENT OF PSYCHIATRIC SERVICES. ITS INSTRUMENTS ENABLE:

- identification of a set of service components which comprise the mental health care system available to the population in a catchment area;
- quantification of the level of mental health care resources available to the population within a specific catchment area;
- assessment of the balance between services, say between hospital and community-based care;
- assessment of the relative weight of each form of support and treatment available;
- comparison among data gathered in different catchment areas, according to the characteristics of the population to be served.