

CHILD AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH IN THE ENLARGED EUROPEAN UNION (CAMHEE): DEVELOPMENT OF EFFECTIVE POLICIES AND PRACTICES

PSSRU

Outline of a research project funded by the European Commission

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BACKGROUND

This is a 30 month project led by the State Mental Health Center, Lithuania. Mental health is a major health problem in the European Union, accounting for more than 20 per cent of all European ill-health and premature death in 2002. One in five children and adolescents suffer from developmental, emotional or behavioural problems, and one in eight has a mental disorder. The mental health of children is particularly important in achieving strong social cohesion, productivity and health in future years. The new EU member states have to take proactive concerted efforts to develop effective approaches to child and adolescent mental health (CAMH) promotion through interaction and dialogue between countries and by drawing on the rich experience of EU-15 countries.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The project aims to provide a set of recommendations and guidelines for effective CAMH policies and practices in European Union, with a special emphasis on new EU member states in the light of Declaration and Action Plan endorsed by WHO European Ministerial Conference on Mental Health in Helsinki in 2005.

1. To create a network of partners within the EU for adopting and implementing modern effective public health approaches in the new and applicant EU countries.
2. To develop guidelines and recommendations for national and municipal (regional) policies in participating countries in the field of CAMH based on the evidence obtained through the independent analysis of country situations, including the analysis of context, resources, processes and outcomes.
3. To initiate and support activities in new and applicant member states in the field of CAMH, with special focus on the implementation of effective and evidence-based policies and practices based on the involvement and participation of children, families and communities.
4. Share experience by networking and joint activities of all the project partners, to advise the European Union and member states on mental health promotion and mental disorder prevention among children and adolescents, with special focus on the management of the changes needed in new member states to move from inherited patterns of institutionalisation and medicalisation to modern public health approaches based on the involvement of children, young people, parents and communities.

METHODOLOGY

Project methodology comprises the development of networks involving appropriate key institutions in each country which are the best placed to carry out relevant analytical and implementation activities. An active and close collaboration, the exchange of European know-how and appropriate innovative and integrative approaches will be essential.

The LSE is particularly involved in work looking at the socio-economic consequences of poor mental health for children.

OUTPUTS

A series of reports to the European Commission is planned and journal papers will be submitted. Information is available at the project website, www.camhee.eu

PROJECT TEAM

At PSSRU LSE this work is being carried out by
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