Further collaboration between European psychiatrists to prevent suicidal behaviors

Suicide is a global phenomenon. More than 800,000 people worldwide die by suicide every year, accounting for 1.4% of all annual deaths, while 1,500,000 attempt suicide (World Health Organization, 2015). In 2015, 56,200 (1.1%) out of the 5.2 million deaths reported in the European Union were due to intentional self-harm; almost 77% suicides concerned men and about 31% persons aged between 45 and 60 (http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/-/DDN-20180716-1?inheritRedirect=true). Suicide is the second leading cause of death amongst young people aged 15-24 years, and in some European countries even the first exceeding the number of accidentals deaths (World Health Organization, 2015).

The Section of Suicidology and Suicide Prevention of the European Psychiatric Association (EPA-SSSP) is aimed at improving research in the field of suicidology and translating research findings into clinical practice, and now accounts for more than 150 members, an international and multidisciplinary network of researchers and clinicians. Main objectives of the EPA-SSSP are raising awareness about suicide, fighting the surrounding stigma, improving understanding of risk and protective factors, disseminating best practices on management and treatment of suicidal patients. For these purposes, the EPA-SSSP website, which achieved more than 7,000 views from all over the world in 2017, has specific sections dedicated to congress activities, publications, guidelines (including the EPA Guidance on suicide treatment and prevention which was developed by several EPA-SSSP members, with first author Danuta Wasserman), news and several other initiatives like a set of flyers that inform practitioners about suicide-related topics.

Considering networking a clue approach to scientific knowledge, EPA-SSSP members are constantly informed on what is new in the field with a monthly newsletter and encouraged to share initiatives occurring in their countries. To further enhance this networking activity, we offer a dedicated “forum space” on our website to every interested National Psychiatric Association, aimed at discussion and debate. Moreover, we can provide consultations and scientific support for national activities focused on suicidal and self-harming behaviours (especially in adolescence). Every input is welcomed to improve our network and provide better care for suicidal patients.

Interested NPAs are invited to contact Marco Sarchiapone at epasectionsuicidology@gmail.com.

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