



Third meeting of the PHEG sub-group on mental health 28 September 2023

The third meeting of the sub-group on mental health of the new Public Health Expert Group (PHEG)¹ was held on 28 September 2023. It was chaired by DG SANTE and attended by the representatives of 16 Member States and Norway. Commission services and agencies (AGRI, EAC, ECHO, EMPL, ENV, REFORM, RTD, SG, JRC and HaDEA).

Commission Communication on a comprehensive approach to mental health

DG SANTE briefly presented the Communication² and each of the 20 flagships, highlighting the close cooperation in implementation with the Member States (through the mental health sub-group) and the stakeholders (via a new online network under the EU Health Policy Platform). Updates on cross-cutting activities were provided by DG AGRI, CNECT, EMPL, RTD and REFORM.

WHO survey results mental health capacity building

The WHO presented the results of the survey undertaken in close collaboration with DG SANTE and OECD, to map the needs, challenges and obstacles for mental health reforms in the Member States, Norway and Iceland. This will help to provide tailored support to each Member State in building capacities for improved mental health systems.

OECD study on best practices in mental health

The OECD presented an update on candidate best and promising practices on prevention and management of NCDs, which they are evaluating to identify their potential impact and transferability. The aim is to provide better evidence and effective guidance to support decision-making related to their transfer and implementation.

Call for best practices on mental health

DG SANTE provided an update on the ongoing call for best and promising practices on mental health³. The deadline to submit practices via the EU Best Practice Portal⁴ was extended to 6 October. DG SANTE will then organise the assessment and may invite the owners of the top-ranked best and promising practices to present them to representatives from EU Member States during a marketplace event to be held later in 2023.

Tour de table on possible future work areas

During the 'tour de table' participants discussed possible actions that could be undertaken. There was widespread approval of the coordinated activities of the Commission, WHO and OECD. Building the resilience of young people emerged as a common thread, as did the benefits of exchange of experience in drafting national strategies for mental health, and the importance of identification of best practices. Further consideration of continuous and harmonised data collection, the use of AI and setting common indicators were also raised. A first working group on providing guidance on stigma and discrimination will be organised.

AOB and next steps

Spain presented the relevant activities and events of the Spanish Presidency. The Chair thanked all participants and colleagues from other services for their valuable input.

¹ https://health.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-12/c_2022_8816_en.pdf

² [com 2023 298 1 act en.pdf \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/com_2023_298_1_act)

³ [Call for best and promising practices on mental health \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/com_2023_298_1_act)

⁴ <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/dyna/bp-portal/>