Men’s Mental Health as an increasing topic in Health Reports in European Countries

Prof. Dr. Doris Bardehle
Foundation of Men’s Health Berlin, Germany

European Public Health Conference, EUPHA, 2013
Though more women are diagnosed with mental health problems, this masks the extent of the problem for men. Men’s depression and other mental health problems are under detected and under treated in all European countries. This is due to men’s difficulty in seeking help, health services limited capacity to reach out to men, and men’s different presentation of symptoms to women with higher levels of substance abuse and challenging behaviours.

ec.europa.eu/health…/men_health_report_2011.pdf   24-09-2013
Mental Health

8 EU Member States are among the 15 countries with highest suicide rates in the world. Stress, depression, substance abuse, antisocial disorders and suicide are more frequent with men.

Recommendations

- EU and all Member States should develop the techniques to detect the 50% of male depression that remains undiagnosed
- Research into the symptoms of male depression
• Since 2007 increase of unemployment of 3% and suicides of 5%
• Increase in Health inequalities in Europe
• Demand for better health and well-being for all
• WHO target: By the year 2020 people´s psychosocial well-being should be improved
• Well-being is part of the social contract between government and the people they represent
Confirmed by the Parliament

Worlds (Lebenswelten) represented: family, school, profession, leisure, health, employment, divorce and separation, crime

Men´s Health as concerns of citizens: formation of men´s health centers, creating a Men´s Center of Excellence (Männerkompetenzzentrum)

Research: Work climate index for the measurement of stress in the workplace

Importance of workplace health promotion

Mental Health problems like in European Men´s Health Report
Mental disorders are widespread and affect quality of life

Proportion of energetic people in 5 years reduced by 1/3

17% feel moderately to highly emotionally charged

3% of men with moderate to severe depression

20% report imbalance between work and privacy

42% of the persons in work are mentally heavily burdened

High costs in the outpatient and inpatient sector

8.3 More gender-competent mental health services
   Gendered mental health promotion and community-based mental health services
   Action on Suicide prevention

Action Plan: Establish a Centre for Research and Development of Men´s Health
   Advance the promotion of men´s health in the workplace
United Kingdom and Norway

**United Kingdom:** „Delivering male. Effective Practice in male mental Health, 2011“
Joint Report of:
a) Centre of Excellence for men’s health policy
b) MIND, Leading mental health charity
c) National Mental Health Development Unit
d) Additionally: Expert Advisory Panel
2006: Equality Act with Gender-Equality-Duty

**Norway:** Action Plan for Gender Equity in Kindergarten and Basic Education 2008-2010
Analysis of physical and mental health

7.6% of men and 9.8% of women feel stressed

61.5% of men with binge drinking experience

11.8% of men obese with increasing trend

„What works with Men?“

• Stress management seems to be more effective than education

• GP´s seem to be able to influence screening behaviour

• Men´s health is still a relatively new field of research
Most frequent diseases that reduce the quality of life of men, Germany (DALY 2010)

1. Ischemic heart diseases
2. Low back pain
3. Lung cancer
4. Stroke
5. Falls
6. Chronic lower respiratory diseases
7. Depression (1990 on rank 10)
8. Diabetes
9. Road traffic accidents
10. Attempted suicide – selfinflicted injury (self-harm)
Two Men’s Health Reports of the Foundation of Men’s Health, Germany

1. Men’s Health Report, October 2010

2. Men’s Health Report, Focus Mental Health, April 2013
Suicides by gender and age groups (abs. numbers), Germany, 2011

Key Indicator for Mental Health
Absenteism due to mental ill-health has doubled in the last 15 years, problem: alcohol and drug abuse

1/7 of all sick leave is due to depression
20% of workers feel stressed by time pressure and disturbances

5-10% of employees have risky or high alcohol consumption. Importance of intra-company prevention of addiction increases

Multitasking, work pressure and 2-eye-intensive operations. Dismissal threat cause mental disorders
Summary from the Reports about Men´s Mental Health

Well-being as Health Target in WHO European Health Report 2012

EU European State of Men´s Health Report emphasises actions for Men´s Mental Health, 2011

European Men´s Health Forum, 2011 with recommendations for physical and mental health for men

National Action Plan in Ireland (including mental health), confirmed by the Parliament, 2008-2013

Global Action Plan, Men´s Reports (2) in Austria, confirmed by the parliament, 2004 and 2012, in UK: Broad consensus on an action program, 2011; Norway: Gender equity in education, 2008

Mental Health Reports: EU (2011), Switzerland (2012), Germany (2013), Denmark (physical and mental health) (2011)
Conclusions

• Too late or not recognized mental diseases reduce the life expectancy and quality of life of men.

• The globalized economy is a new burden for health, especially for mental health. Effort-reward imbalance in men increase (Gratifikationskrisen).

• There is a close relation between mental health and well-being as stated in the European Health Report of WHO, 2012.

• In the era of globalization we need National Action Plans with support of the parliaments for health with special focus on gender problems.
To avoid Men’s Mental Health Problems