

EPA GUIDANCE PAPERS AND THEIR IMPACT IN REDUCING THE BURDEN OF MENTAL DISORDERS

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Introduction: The European Psychiatric Association (EPA) established the project “EPA Guidance” in order to improve the quality of mental healthcare in Europe by disseminating written information based on best evidence and expert consensus.

Objectives: To provide information on good clinical practice to national societies, health authorities and clinicians.

Aims: The development of guidance for selected mental healthcare topics in order to improve the practice of psychiatry in Europe.

Methods: Systematic literature searches and consensus processes.

Results: In order to improve the quality of mental healthcare and thereby reducing the burden of mental disorders, a first series of guidance documents on the quality of services structures, prevention and treatment of suicidal crises, prevention of mental disorders in general (illness prevention and health promotion), pharmacotherapy of depression, and how to deal with conflicts of interest in research and other professional activities, was published. **The series of EPA guidance formulates recommendations and proposes strategies that may help to reduce the burden of mental disorders.** The burden of mental disease is sought to be reduced by evidence-based, effective mental health prevention and promotion strategies as well as by optimizing the structures and processes of mental health services by the development of recommendations in the EPA guidance on the quality of mental health services.

Conclusion: Many important clinical situations or problems beyond treatment that until now lacked proper guidance are addressed by the EPA guidance.