

EUROPE CHALLENGES THE BURDEN OF MENTAL DISORDERS

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Time based composite measures of disability have replaced the traditional use of death rates to evaluate society's mental health status as a more meaningful measures for the burden of diseases and the need for treatment and care. These measures have revealed with some variability and increasing precision that mental and neurologic disorders account for a major and further increasing proportion of the all-cause disability burden worldwide.

In Europe, mental and neurologic conditions combined are already now the most disabling diseases. A recent pan-European study covering 30 countries and the EU-population of 514 million people, recently examined comprehensively the size and burden and cost of mental and other "disorders of the brain". Findings e. g.:

- Each year, 38.2% of the EU population (64.8 million people) suffers from a mental disorder.
- The treatment situation remains highly deficient. Only 1/3 of all cases affected receive treatment, those receiving treatment do so with considerable delays of several years and rarely with appropriate, state-of-the-art therapies
- Additionally, many millions patients suffer from neurologic disorders such as stroke and Parkinson's disease, cases that may add on top of the above estimates.
- The total cost burden is immense (approx 800 billion €), mainly due to indirect costs. The low direct (treatment) cost proportion is unique to mental disorders and markedly different from other prevalent somatic diseases (e.g. cancer, diabetes).