

Toruń Declaration 2007

Declaration from EUFAMI's¹ 4th European Congress held in Toruń, Poland, 14-16 September 2007

All the delegates at the Congress, including representatives from the 50 EUFAMI family associations from across all parts of Europe, call on all European National Governments to fully implement the Helsinki² Action Plan which aims to reduce the burden of care on families³ and recognises that it is a basic human right for all persons to have equal opportunities to experience a good quality of life.

EUFAMI declares that:

In today's world it is no longer acceptable that people with mental illness cannot fulfil their potential in society because of exclusion from social life due to stigmatisation, lack of employment or occupation, or poor physical health:

- Health care professionals must recognise that while people with mental illness have to be actively involved in their own recovery process, family and friends play an important role too - provided that they are properly informed, empowered and supported both by Mental Health Associations and by professionals.**
- Health and social care professionals must attend to physical health needs in addition to prescribing medications and psychological treatments, and we earnestly request them to adapt their training and practices accordingly. Furthermore health and social care professionals should promote a system of quality assurance to secure the important goal of remission and recovery.**
- It is essential that there is good communication between people with mental illness, their families and friends and the professionals involved in their care, and that they work in a coordinated way.**

It was once a widely held belief that the earth was the centre of the Universe, until Nicolaus Copernicus, astronomer and mathematician born in Toruń declared that on the contrary the earth and the other planets revolve around the sun⁴. In the same way mental health hospitals and other services were once the focus of care for people with mental illness, but now the focus must be firmly on the patient and family.

¹ EUFAMI (the European Federation of Associations of Families of People with Mental Illness) represents one in four families in Europe who are affected by mental illness

² Helsinki Action Plan, issued at the WHO Ministerial Conference held in Helsinki in January 2005

³ Families include adults (parents, spouses and siblings and their relatives) and importantly children.

⁴ De revolutionibus orbium coelestium, 1543