

MENTAL HEALTH OF CHILDREN & ADOLESCENTS

24 June 2022



KONINKLIJKE ACADEMIE
VOOR GENEESKUNDE
VAN BELGIË



ACADEMIE ROYALE
DE MEDECINE
DE BELGIQUE

EPIDEMIOLOGY

- Prevalence of mental disorders in children & adolescents: 16% for boys = girls in Belgium (UNICEF, 2021)
- > 25% needs specialized help; Internationally: only 16-27% receive specialized mental health care (no figures for Belgium); underdiagnosis and undertreatment
- Total burden of disease (DALY's) 10-24 year olds: 45% due to psychological problems
- Onset of mental disorders in adults: 34.6% before the age of 14 years, 48.4% before 18 years and 62.5% before 25 years
- Suicide: leading cause of death in 15-19 year olds

COMPOSITION OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- Danielle BALÉRIAUX
- Peter BOLS (general secretary KAGB)
- Georges CASIMIR (permanent secretary ARMB)
- Paul COSYNS
- Bernard DAN
- Joke DENEKENS (vice-president)
- Véronique DELVENNE (vice-president)
- Karlien DHONDT
- Jean-Michel FOIDART
- Geneviève LAUREYS
- Alain MALCHAIR
- Bernard SABBE (president)
- Brigitte VELKENIERS (president KAGB)

STEPSTONES TOWARDS A NEW APPROACH

- Joint statement for the realization of networks and care circuits in mental health care for children and adolescents (10-12-2012);
- Guide towards a new mental health policy for children and adolescents (30-03-2015);
- National plan for a new mental health policy for children and adolescents (2015 – 2020);
- Committee for the new mental health policy for children and adolescents (08-03-2017).

SURVEY OF THE NETWORKS (1)

- WINGG (West-Vlaanderen)
- RADAR (Oost-Vlaanderen)
- PANGG 0-18 (Antwerpen)
- LIGANT (Limburg)
- YUNECO (Vlaams Brabant)
- BRU-STARS (Brussel)
- ARCHIPEL (Brabant Wallon)
- RHESEAU (Hainaut)
- KIRIKOU (Namur)
- REALiSM (Liège)
- MATILDA (Luxembourg)
- KIJUPSY (Deutschsprachige Gemeinschaft)

STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS (ACADEMICS; ORGANISATIONS; PROFESSIONALS AND PATIENTS; POLICY): 5 TOPICS

1. **Scientific state-of-the-art concerning a clear definition of the concept of mental health, evidence-based biopsychosocial preventive, diagnostic and therapeutic interventions**
2. **Importance of prevention in pre-, peri- and postnatal care, infant and in transitional psychiatry**
3. **Participation and destigmatization**
4. **A (digital/app) road map for Belgium**
5. **Data registration**

Approval of the Advice by ARMB and KAGB: 30-01-2021

1. DEFINITION & FORMATION

Scientific state-of-the-art concerning:

- A clear definition of mental health;
- Evidence-based biopsychosocial preventive, diagnostic and therapeutic interventions (including use & development of guidelines);
- The importance of universities and high schools in the formation of all health care professionals

1. DEFINITION & FORMATION

Recommendation 1.

(Workshop 1)

Integrate the biopsychosocial, holistic and transdisciplinary approach of the child, adolescent and family into the **basic training of all welfare and health professionals.**

2. PREVENTION I

The importance of prevention in pre-, peri- and postnatal care and infant psychiatry;

- Prevention + curation
- Inclusion of all relevant actors
- “First 1000 days”; need for a global vision and sufficient number of adequately trained caregivers



2. PREVENTION II

- The importance of prevention in transitional psychiatry:
 - Adolescence = vulnerable period; feeling bullied or threatened; suicidality; addiction; delinquency
 - Milestone – project (Europe)
 - Australian headspace model

2. PREVENTION

Recommendation 2.

(Workshops 5 and 6)

Strongly focus on primary and secondary **prevention**, including by simplifying and increasing the **accessibility** of mental health care for children and adolescents. More uniform and targeted **diagnostics** are needed at the start of the care process, leading to more focused **interventions**. It is also recommended to expand **transitional care** by creating a bridge function, aiming to guide vulnerable persons and their families in continuity towards adult mental health care.

3. PARTICIPATION AND DESTIGMATISATION

- Proposition of new concepts, models and interventions with “peer helpers” that can be introduced and applied in the Belgian context, exploration of care trajectories and care continuum by the users themselves and communication to the public for destigmatization;
- 4 basic concepts: aims; context (micro-, meso- and macro-level); actors; and strategies (informing, understanding and deciding).

3. PARTICIPATION AND DESTIGMATISATION

- Policy makers: A Handbook + Practical Manual for the participation of children and youngsters for all networks;
 - Methods for different age groups in function of the aims;
 - Functional framework: means and personnel;
 - Participation of children and youngsters
- Information of children and adolescents, and their parents;
- Scientific research: effects of participation

3. PARTICIPATION

Recommendation 3.

(Workshop 2)

Publish a **handbook and practical playbook** on the participation of children and adolescents in mental health care as a guideline for the networks and actors

4. A (DIGITAL/ APP) ROAD MAP FOR BELGIUM

A (digital/app) road map for Belgium with a coherent overview of all services of mental health care for children & adolescents in the zero, first, second and third lines:

- Who does what for whom?
- Quantitative and qualitative data;
- Increasing accessibility and continuity of care;
- For users, caregivers and policy makers.

4. A (DIGITAL/ APP) ROAD MAP FOR BELGIUM

Recommendation 4.

(Workshop 4)

Create a user-friendly and accessible **Belgian road map** for users, care providers and governments, containing quantitative and qualitative information about all support and care facilities for mental health of children and adolescents.

5. DATA REGISTRATION

Data registration: need for one general system throughout the different sectors of care, that can provide data on care consumption, care trajectories and existing gaps:

21-03-2016: IMC advice for registration of minimal data with the use of the HONOS- and CANSAS-scales (ICD-10 ---- ICD11);

This proposition was never implemented but could simply be reactivated.

5. DATA REGISTRATION

Recommendation 5.

(Workshop 3)

Set up a **national system of uniform data registration** for mental health care, preferably within the existing medical data platforms.

6. NATIONAL PILOT PROJECT

Recommendation 6.

Facilitate the roll-out of a **national pilot project** combining all the above recommendations, while contributing to scientific research, through the follow-up (from pregnancy to adulthood) and registration of a large naturalistic cohort.