



*YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH:
FROM CONTINUITY OF PSYCHOPATHOLOGY TO
CONTINUITY OF CARE (STraMeHS)*

The Voice of Family Members

*16th -18th December 2014
Venice, Italy*

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President EUFAMI*



EUFAMI

**European Federation of Associations of Families of People with Mental Illness
Europese Federatie van Verenigingen van Familieleden van de Psychisch Zieken
Fédération européenne des Associations de Familles de Malades Psychiques
Europäische Föderation von Organisationen der Angehörigen psychisch Kranker**

**Founded in 1992 – 20 years
anniversary – 19th December 2012**

**Represents circa 25 million families
in Europe**

**48 member organisations in 28
countries**

**Founding Principle: Commitment to
improving care and welfare for all
people affected by mental illness –
particularly families and carers**

Based in Leuven, Belgium





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- **Family members need to be fully integrated into the work of professional clinicians and social services if the diagnosis, treatment and care of young people showing signs of mental troubles is to be useful and effective**

 - **Why?**
Because they will usually be the first to notice the possible warning signs and are likely to be the main provider of day to day care



Diagnosis

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- **Most important information for establishing a diagnosis comes from asking about the presence of symptoms.**
 - **Absent scientific tests we rely on surveys, interviews.**



Care and treatment

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- **World wide policies to transfer the care and treatment of people with mental illness from hospital to community settings place increased responsibility and unsought burdens on their family.**
- **Particularly as concerns youth and adolescent members.**
- **Families become the main if not sole source of the care provided, often full time.**



Conclusions - 1

- **Families are best placed of all to identify early warning signs and symptoms which may lead on to mental illness. But they need to be made aware of possible significance and given the opportunity to voice concerns**
- **Their role and expert knowledge should be recognised and respected as an indispensable part of the whole process of diagnosing mental illness in young people and in providing their subsequent care and treatment**
- **Involving families leads to better outcomes. They should therefore be formally integrated with the professional care team and the young person. One way is through a version of the Triologue method**



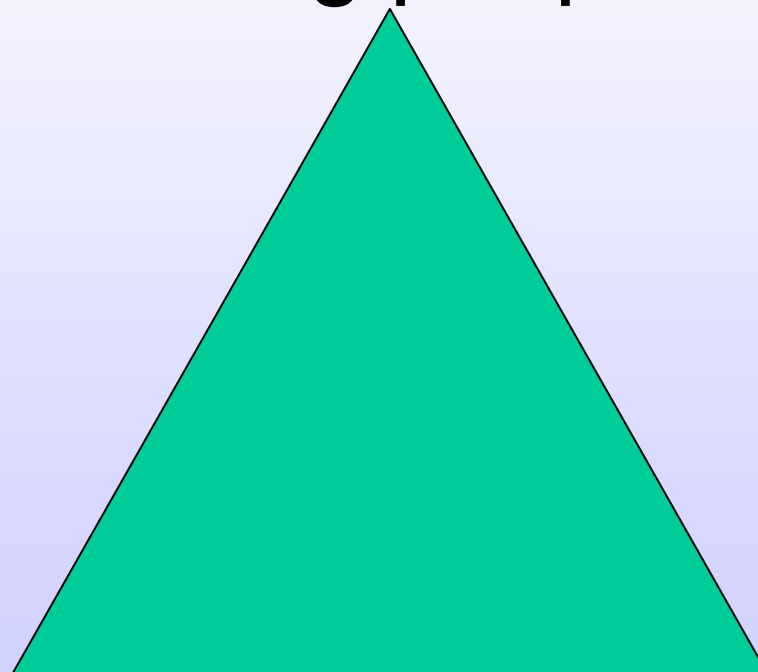
Conclusions - 2

- **Families should be given the information they need to help them provide care**
- **They should be involved in planning and agreeing a care plan for their family member**
- **Their own needs as carers should be recognised and responded to with appropriate help and support**



Triialogue

Young people



Professionals

Families



THANK YOU