

Svensk psykiatrisk förening i europeiskt samarbete

MOVING TOGETHER TOWARDS NEW HORIZONS

– 2nd Young Psychiatrists' Network Meeting, Riga 2011

KUNSKAPSUTBYTE The original meeting was initiated by the Swedish Eastern Europe Committee, Associate Professor Jerker Hanson (to the right in the picture), involving young psychiatrists (YPs) from Lithuania, Sweden, Belarus, and Russia in Kaliningrad in May 2009.

This was facilitated by a grant from the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA <http://www.sida.se>), and in 2010 around 50 YPs from 10 European countries met in Vilnius, facilitated by, and benefiting from the hospitality of Lithuanian colleagues.

Positive evaluation by participants, allied to the eagerness of Latvian YPs (supported by the Latvian Psychiatric Association (<http://www.psihiatru-asociacija.lv>), Riga Centre of Psychiatry and Addiction disorders and Riga Stradins University (<http://www.rsu.lv>)) made a second meeting possible. Both the Swedish Psychiatric Association (<http://www.svenskpsykiatri.se>) and World Psychiatric Association (WPA) had major roles in the planning of the conference, with the WPA providing a grant, allowing us to invite colleagues from non-Baltic countries, such as Belarus, Czech Republic, Moldova, Greece and Ukraine.

The meeting, held in Riga in April 2011, attracted 90 participants from 18 countries, the programme including lectures, workshops, study visits and a rich social programme.

Opening lectures by Professor Norman Sartorius and Professor Sir David Goldberg underlined their commitment to the education of YPs, and provided a unique insight into broader issues of mental health. The network aimed to tighten links with important and well-established organizations, with presentations and discussions amongst representatives from the WPA Early Career Psychiatrists Council (Estonia, Russia, Sweden), European Federation of Psychiatric Trainees and European Psychiatric Association – Early Career Psychiatrists Committee, who informed us of their aims, and established links for future co-operation.

The major scientific topics, personality disorders and coercive care, were presented in the form of lectures from specialists of Eastern and Western Europe, and informal case presentations and workshops, highlighting cultural differences. Study visits at the Riga Centre of Psychiatry and Addiction disorders gave plenty of opportunity for informal discussion of differences in healthcare.

The conference programme also gave YPs the opportunity to develop their own skills, and a number presented their first poster or presentation. Post-conference feedback, involving anonymous responses of 67 participants from 14 countries, was positive, and more than half (39 out of 67) were eager to take part in organising a 3rd



Dr Nikita Bezborodov, Riga, t v, och Jerker Hansson, Stockholm.

Foto: www.psihiatru-asociacija.lv

meeting. Almost all respondents indicated an interest in participating in a similar meeting. Two thirds of participants depended on financial support for attendance, and 64 of 67 stating that the meeting had a positive personal impact on them.

Enthusiasm for the conference was indicated by the fact that 58 of 67 participants were willing to share a room with a person of the same gender to facilitate more attendees. Qualitative comments from the evaluation included statements like "it was fantastic" and expressions of gratitude for participation. At the end of the conference Belorussian colleagues offered to take responsibility for hosting the meeting in Minsk in 2012, and this was agreed on by the group.

The organizing team will now take on the challenge of organising a meeting in a non-EU country and obtaining adequate funding to facilitate another successful meeting. ●

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