
SETTING PRIORITIES IN MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH: RESULTS FROM THE ROAMER STUDY

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Introduction:The ROAMER project, funded by the European Commission, has been designed to develop a comprehensive, consensus-based roadmap to promote research on mental health in Europe. It has been repeatedly affirmed that the different people involved in the mental health field hold different views about the desirability of clinical outcomes and the general principle is that research agenda should reflect the needs and values of the people who use health services.

Objectives:To involve different stakeholders in the development of the agenda for mental health research.

Aims:To identify priorities in mental health research in Europe for the next ten years.

Methods:An online survey was conducted with national associations/organizations of psychiatrists, other mental health professionals, users and/or carers, and psychiatric trainees in the 27 countries of the European Union.

Results:One hundred and eight associations/organizations out of the 154 contacted returned the questionnaire (response rate: 70%). According to all categories of stakeholders, the five most frequently selected research priorities were early detection and management of mental disorders, quality of mental health services, prevention of mental disorders, rehabilitation and social inclusion, and new medications for mental disorders. The top five research areas in terms of importance were quality of mental health services, suicide prevention, early detection and management of mental disorders, rehabilitation and social inclusion, prevention of mental disorders. The least developed research areas in each country were molecular bases of mental disorders, environmental risk/protective factors for mental disorders, resilience and mental health, prevention of mental disorders, health and well-being of carers.

Conclusions:These results show that some rebalancing in favour of psychosocial and health service research is needed.