

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000498/24
to the Commission
Antoni Comín i Oliveres (NI), Carles Puigdemont i Casamajó (NI)
(14 February 2024)**

Subject: Recognition of former mental health patients as professionals supporting current patients

The lived experience of mental illness can turn into patient expertise, enabling individuals to assist others on their path to recovery. At this stage of rehabilitation, individuals with their own experience of mental health issues (i.e. mental health peer experts) can play a crucial role in providing support to others who have experienced or are experiencing mental health disorders.

Mental health peer experts currently carry out their activity through associations representing affected individuals, such as in Germany ⁽¹⁾, in Spain through Leonardo da Vinci projects ⁽²⁾, and in France.

Despite adding value to interventions within the healthcare and social systems, this activity lacks adequate and much-needed formal recognition as a profession by the Commission and the Member States.

1. Can the Commission advocate for the regulation of specific training programmes for individuals with personal experience of mental health disorders, the goal of such programmes being to equip them to engage in caregiving, support and psychoeducation tasks for other individuals grappling with mental health challenges, particularly in the rehabilitation and recovery stages?
2. Can the Commission explore the possibility of recognising the profession of mental health peer expert within the realm of healthcare professions?

Submitted: 14.2.2024

**Answer given by Ms Kyriakides on behalf of the European Commission
(4 April 2024)**

The Commission adopted a communication on a comprehensive approach to mental health ⁽³⁾ in 2023, which includes 20 flagship initiatives and identifies EUR 1.23 million in funding opportunities.

In this context, the Commission, in collaboration with the World Health Organisation, is providing tailored support to Member States to build capacity for mental health with EUR 11 million funding from the EU4Health programme.

This may include tools and solutions adapted to national needs, such as the professionalisation of lived experience through the development and dissemination of training packages that aim at integrating lived mental health experience as a professional profile of multi-disciplinary mental health teams.

In addition, a multi-disciplinary training programme on mental health with a budget of EUR 9 million under the EU4Health programme, was launched in January 2024.

Representatives of people with lived experience may be included in the design and implementation of the training programme to ensure that the perspective of people with lived experience is provided and integrated.

⁽¹⁾ <https://ex-in.info/>

⁽²⁾ <http://p2p.intras.es/>

⁽³⁾ https://health.ec.europa.eu/document/download/cef45b6d-a871-44d5-9d62-3cecc47eda89_en?filename=com_2023_298_1_act_en.pdf