

Training courses for community facilitators

Target groups and materials

The target group are community facilitators such as staff of helpdesks and information centres (counsellors etc.), the police, teachers/pedagogues, the clergy, geriatric nurses/social services, and pharmacists.

To meet the expectations and requirements of the very different target groups, the basic seminar on depression and suicidality is adaptable. For each target group, a separate training package is available. The main aspects and the structure have been kept the same; however, different priorities must be set in addition:

- Seminars for geriatric nurses therefore address the topic focused on age and depression.
- Seminars for teachers mainly deal with child and youth psychological aspects.
- Seminars for the police stress the issue of acute suicidality and crisis intervention.

Each training package developed comprises the following educational materials:

- A pool of presentation slides specially designed for the respective target group; each approx. 45 – 50 slides to choose from, to adapt and to modify
- short educational manual for the course of the seminar ("threads")
- specification of the respective target group concerning its basic standard of knowledge on the topic etc.
- information materials (flyers, brochures, CD-Rom etc; "give-aways"; literature references)

Content of the basic seminar

The structure of the seminars is a combination of:

- Educational lecture on the theory
- Transfer of the knowledge onto practically relevant situations occurring in the target groups' daily work
- Exercises and active involvement of the audience in order to optimize the handling of such situations (e.g. crisis, help seeking dialogues etc.).
- Discussion about / exchange of personal experiences and recollections

The content of a basic seminar for community multipliers is subdivided into:

Theoretical aspects

- Frequency and prevalence of depression
 - Symptoms and causes of depression
 - Diagnosis of depression
 - Therapy and treatment of depression
 - Suicidality / acute crises
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Practical and interactive elements on questions like

- How to raise the issue of depression and mental disorders.
 - How to talk about suicidality.
 - How to detect acute suicidality.
 - How to handle an acute suicidal crisis.
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Additional information issues

- Knowledge about local help-offers, supply and care structure
 - Presentation and distribution of information materials (flyers, brochures, videos, etc.)
 - Supplementary literature and information references
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Characterization of a half-day seminar's course

1. Introduction

- The purpose and the work of the NAAD/EAAD
- (Re)collection of personal experiences concerning the topic

2. Relevance of depression and mental disabilities

- Epidemiological aspects, data on prevalence and frequency of depression,
- Importance of medical care optimization and public awareness

3. Symptoms, diagnosis and causes

- Collection of symptoms on the basis of a patient's case history on video
- Explaining the different levels on which depression can occur and affect (mental, somatic, behavioural)
- Classifying of symptoms; primary and secondary symptoms according to ICD-10
- Importance of a differential diagnosis
- Plenum discussion on differentiation between the disease depression and grief / mourning / existential disorientation

- Course and progression of depression; depressive phases; unipolar, neurotic and bipolar characteristics
- Medical diagnosis to avoid misinterpretation as e.g. temporarily life-crises
- Multi-causal theory about the causes of depression

4. *Therapy and treatment of depression*

- Discussion about different treatments etc.
- Comparison and explanation of the different established and approved therapies, especially pharmaco- and psychotherapy
- Typical prejudices against medical treatment; short introduction into the different antidepressants, neuroleptica and tranquilizer
- Non-compliance, adverse effects and other reasons for unsuccessful medical treatment
- Principles and procedure of psychotherapy (e.g. behaviour therapy)
- Optimisation of diagnosis and therapy via education of patients and integration of relatives; distribution of information material produced in the context of the Alliance Against Depression
- Implementation of a demonstration followed by active exercise of role-plays in smaller groups:
 - How to raise the issue and in which context?
 - What kind of support can be offered?
 - How can the community multipliers personally handle the confrontation with the topic?
 - At which state is an expert's help (doctor, psychiatrist, psychologist etc.) needed or even indispensable?

5. *Suicidality*

- Close relation between suicides and mental disorders
- Statistics on causes of death, suicide numbers and high risk groups
- Indicators for suicidality
- Personal exchange in twos or threes on experiences with suicidality
- Given a private and trusting atmosphere it is recommended to actively address possible suicidality. Most patients feel some kind of relief talking about their suicidal thoughts/ideas/plans.
- Differentiation between different stages and risk potentials of suicidality.
- Demonstrated in a role-play:
 - How to raise the issue of suicidality?

- How to handle emotional crisis?
- How community multipliers could cope with the topic themselves.
- To which degree is the person in question suicidal and his/her life at risk?
- What kind of help and support can be offered?
- How can the situation be eased and who can intervene if escalation may occur?
- Practical aspects how to ease an emotional / suicidal crisis

6. *Summary*

- Feedback from the audience
- Summarizing of the core-messages
- Additional literature and information references