
Press Information

Too rarely and often recognized too late: Depression

8th European Depression Day on 1st of October 2011 and 1st German Congress of Patients on October 2nd 2011

Berlin (Germany), 21st of September 2011 – Depressions are and have been common, mostly recurring, serious and life-threatening diseases. There has been an increase in the diagnosis 'depression', for example in the statistics of health insurances. However, it is likely that the increase is not due to an increase in the number of people suffering from depression. Rather, the increase might be due to the fact that more people who are suffering from depression actually go to seek professional help. Furthermore physicians recognize depression – which is often hidden behind somatic complaints – and name depression as such. Thus, depression is not hidden behind other diagnoses such as chronic back pain, tinnitus, burnout or fibromyalgia or something else.

In the last thirty years, there has been a tremendous reduction in suicide rates, with a decrease from 18.000 to about 9.600 in Germany. To a large extent, this may ascribed to the fact that more people affected are freeing themselves from isolation and are seeking professional help and are also more often treated with antidepressants and psychotherapy. "The bisection in the number of suicides since 1980 is very pleasing. However, in Germany, still thirty people are committing suicide every day. The "Stiftung Deutsche Depressionshilfe" [English: Foundation German Depression Aid] and the European Alliance Against Depression want to contribute to a further bisection of suicides with the next ten years", according to Prof. Dr. Ulrich Hegerl, Director of the Clinic und Policlinic for Psychiatry and Psychotherapy at the University of Leipzig, Chairman of the Foundation Deutsche Depressionshilfe and President of the German and European Alliance Against Depression on the 21st of September 2011.

The first German Congress of Patients which is taking place on 2nd October 2011 in Leipzig, Germany is aimed at putting 'depression' into the limelight supporting persons affected by depression to use the therapeutical options more consistently than before and encouraging them to represent their interests with more confidence.

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