



# UNION EUROPÉENNE DES MÉDECINS SPÉCIALISTES

## SECTION OF PSYCHIATRY

### PRESS RELEASE

#### **Increasing Number of Refugees in Europe: Meeting the Challenge of Delivering Quality Mental Health Services**

On Friday the 16<sup>th</sup> of October, during their meeting in Berlin, the UEMS Section of Psychiatry took the first step in developing a plan on how to meet the challenges faced by the increasing numbers of people seeking refuge in Europe. The plan will address the training and education of psychiatrists now and in the future.

Refugees have complex health needs. They have a high rate of severe mental disorders, trauma related mental disorders as well as physical illness. There are language difficulties that demand the use of interpreters. Only staff with the proper qualifications can meet their needs.

The UEMS Section of Psychiatry will define the competences needed by a psychiatrist to address these challenges.

We are also calling on other organisations to follow suit.

Governments need to identify healthcare professionals among those seeking refuge and support them so that they can work, thereby maintaining competencies in a group of professionals of the utmost importance in their transcultural understanding. These professionals are also crucial if refugees are to return to their homeland in the future. We also call on governments to seek normalization of everyday life for refugees as quickly as possible. This will act both as a first line of prevention against the development of new cases of mental and physical illness and on a secondary level against further trauma.

The Section has begun the work immediately and hope to have a draft plan ready within a few months.

**UEMS Psychiatry Section Officers  
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