

Minutes from the second meeting of the European Network for Negative symptoms (EuroNES)

23rd September 2015 at Charite, Berlin

All together 21 members from France, Netherlands, Germany, Norway, Ireland, Turkey and Switzerland took part. The aim of the meeting was to consolidate the network and to identify areas for collaboration across the network. **Next meeting will be in Florence before the SIRS: April 2-6 2016 in Florence.**

The main part of the meeting was structured discussion rounds on specific topics:

- a) Definition of negative symptoms – primary vs secondary, persistent, deficit (Chair: Galderisi)
- b) Assessment of negative symptoms (Chair: Dollfus/Mucci)
- c) Dimensions of negative symptoms – apathy/avolition vs diminished expression (Chair: Faerden)
- d) Negative symptoms: reward and dopamine (Chair: Heinz/Schlagenhauf/Deserno)
- e) Negative symptoms: goal-directed behavior and prefrontal cortex (Chair: Kaiser)
- f) Psychological models of negative symptoms (Chair: Lincoln)
- g) Treatment (Chair: Aleman)
- h) Avenues for collaboration (Chair: Galderisi)

The main issues can be summarized down to the following:

We need to make an overview of the different definitions for negative symptoms (persistent, enduring, deficit) that are used in Europe and post it on our website.

The different scales vary in their representation of the negative symptoms; the BPRS and PANSS have poor representation of motivation while this is strong in the SDS. Motivation is well represented in the BNSS and was suggested to create a proxy measure for Deficit Schizophrenia. The EuroNES network could be used for collaborative studies and translation of the BNSS and other instruments. Self-assessment of negative symptoms as a new approach was presented.

The construct of primary and secondary negative symptoms was challenged. Other symptoms are not named in this way. Also the categorical/dimensional approach to these symptoms was discussed as well as the two domains vs symptoms vs one factor.

Research on motivation is a productive field and is well represented in the EuroNES group (Berlin, Groningen, Zurich, Naples, Oslo).

Specific treatments for negative symptoms have only started and much more is needed.

Suggestions for studies addressing primary and secondary negative symptoms, etiology/biology of negative symptoms, better understanding of the heterogeneity and psychological models were discussed.

Other topics:

ECSR: A section on negative symptoms is suggested and will need 6 board members. Sections will get responsibility for one Symposium at the ECSR congress. Silvana as the president elect of ECSR will follow up on this.

ECNP: Gives opportunities for research collaboration and an initiative has been taken for translation of BNNS and SNS, as well as validation of the instruments in Europe using a common core protocol.

The way forward

Next meeting will be in Florence on April the 2nd before the welcome reception for the congress: from 13-17. The goal of this meeting will be to present ongoing research on negative symptoms and suggest collaborations on research topics and the use of common instruments in order to pool data.