

## Mental Health in Europe

PRESS RELEASE

---

Date 14<sup>th</sup> March 2017

### **European counselling organisations unite to challenge government provision**

A Europe wide network of counselling organisations has called on Governments to take seriously the need for resources devoted to treating those with mental health issues.

The Association of Christian Counsellors-Europe at its recent conference in Switzerland concluded that it is widely acknowledged that provision of appropriate support for those suffering with mental ill health is inadequate. President of ACC-Europe Jacques Poujol said “We call on Governments across Europe to take seriously the decline in mental well-being, particularly among those of lower income who often find difficulty in accessing acceptable levels of help. We are asking them to recognise the gaps in provision. Governments now need to move on and really listen to what the professional bodies are saying.”

Kathy Spooner of ACC in the UK commented “The shortage of provision is putting severe strain on existing services and resulting in many people having to go without appropriate treatment. NHS provision varies across the country and where available tends to be short term or crisis management. However many people are coping with chronic issues that need counselling or psychotherapy over an extended period of time and this tends to be available only in the private or voluntary sector. Counsellors spend many years training, at great cost, and are often frustrated that, due to inflexibility in NHS budgets, they cannot offer low cost or no cost counselling to people in the greatest need.”

Proper mental health provision, of which counselling is a part, can mean for example that:

- People are able to cope better and thus avoid ongoing distress and misery.
- People can hold down a job where previously they couldn't cope
- Children and adolescents are given support to cope with the many pressures of today's society
- Rates of self harm, addiction and suicide can be reduced

Kathy Spooner is Director of Counselling and Psychotherapy with the Association of Christian Counsellors

### **Notes to editors**

---

**ACC-Europe is a network of associations across 11 countries and with contacts in several others. Their counsellors provide hundreds of thousands of hours of counselling every year.**

**In 2017 ACC Europe held their annual leaders meeting in Vevey, Switzerland. The 2018 meeting will be in the United Kingdom.**

**In the UK, one in four people are affected by mental health issues at some time in their lives. With proper support, they are usually able to cope more adequately with the ups and downs of life and issues that arise.**

**ACC counsellors are professional counsellors who carry out this demanding work inspired by their Christian faith. In the UK, ACC (founded in 1992) holds a register of professional counsellors accredited by Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care**

For further information, please contact Kathy Spooner

078 6655 2327 or [counselling@acc-uk.org](mailto:counselling@acc-uk.org)

Follow us: [www.acc-uk.org](http://www.acc-uk.org) , on Facebook and Twitter (@ACClatest)