

First eMEN event in Germany at the World Congress of Psychiatry 2017: a brief review

The first eMEN event in Germany took place within the context of the World Congress of Psychiatry in Berlin, on October 12th. The audience consisted of health-professionals, start-up founders, students, other professionals and the interested public. About 180 people participated in the event.

Under the heading of „Getting in touch with digital interventions for mental health: practical insights for health professionals“ it was aimed for an interdisciplinary exchange of health professionals and application providers. The agenda comprised current research outcomes and implementation experience reports, as well as challenges and fields of work in internet interventions. A start-up slam was organised to support app developers.

The event was hosted by DGPPN and the German Alliance for Mental Health. Dr. Iris Hauth (Past President DGPPN) and Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Gaebel (Chairman of the German Alliance for Mental Health) welcomed the participants and opened the event.

First off, Oyono Vlijter (Arq Foundation) shortly reported on the objectives of the eMEN project. Prof. Dr. Gerhard Andersson (Linköping University, Sweden) gave an insight on experiences in clinical use of internet interventions in Sweden and respective data. After this keynote, Dr. Jan Philipp Klein (University Medical Center Schleswig-Holstein in Lübeck, Germany) outlined the necessity of quality criteria in internet interventions and presented preliminary drafts. Dr. Rüdiger Zwerenz (University Medical Center of the Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, Germany) presented data of and experience with a programme implemented in blended-care in clinical daily routine. Prof. Dr. Dirk Lehr (Leuphana University of Lüneburg, Germany) gave a talk about prospects and boundaries of self-help treatment programmes and Dr. Youssef Shiban (University of Regensburg, Germany) gave insight into the use of virtual reality in psychotherapy.

To get in touch with digital intervention programmes and support interconnectivity of the field, we invited 13 start-ups and young companies that provide mental health applications. Through an open-call (amongst others on the DGPPN website) they had the chance to apply prior to the event. All were provided with a stand so that participants could get in touch and get first insights in the different interventions. In the start-up slam seven of them introduced their product in a 5-minutes short presentation. Start-ups and companies on-site were Arya, C2Care, Selfapy, Bluebird Technologies, Moodgym, Pesky gNATS, Telepsy, minddistrict, Psyrena, HausMed Coachings, Instahelp, WeMingo and Get.On Institute.

The event, once more, pointed out, that e-mental health applications are a promising field in health care. Innovative applications and computer programmes enter the market in great numbers. Upcoming challenges will be to evaluate these new products and implement them into primary health care.