

**PAN-HELLENIC COMMITTEE
OF (EX-) USERS AND SURVIVORS OF PSYCHIATRY**

DECLARATION

We, individuals and representatives of groups and self-help movements, who met on the 7th and 8th of June, 2008 in Thessaloniki, thoroughly discussed the psychiatric situation in Greece. Unfortunately, the reality of mental health in Greece, instead of getting improved and fostering the promotion of our rights, it is even more barbaric during the last few years, reminding us of times when those who are called "mentally ill" were seen as a victim or a scapegoat. More and more we hear everyday news of abuse, torturing and maltreatment of persons which display "socially unacceptable behaviour". For this reason we have decided to publicize our views, in order to strengthen efforts for the defence of our own dignity.

- We claim our rights as humans and as citizens.
- We claim the application of European and Greek legislation for the defence of our rights.
- We claim penalties for our rights' violations, by clear, and not vague, acts of law. We claim the application of the penal code against any violator of our rights, as for any other citizen. (these two sentences say similar things do you want both?)
- We demand thorough information about the risks and the unwanted effects of the prescribed psychiatric drugs. We also demand the possibility to choose between alternative, even drug-free, modes of treatment. We state that we will not be accepting any form of sponsorship from psychiatric drug companies for any of our activities.
- Our representation and participation in all aspects of decision making at a local, regional or national level should be substantial and meaningful. By law this will enable us to intervene and even cancel any

potential unfavorable or biased against us views and decisions, instead of having a decorative role as we do today.

- Alternatives to the traditional medical model psychiatric approach should be continued through national funding.
- We demand our substantial and universal work rehabilitation including normal jobs and we ask for the Social Cooperatives to transform into real cooperatives with a majority representation of us in the board of directors, as well as the recognition of all our civil rights and our capacity to contract? (not sure what you mean by this is this about having financial and insurance contracts or is it just about employment?)
- We ask from those responsible to make publicly known immediately:
 - The life expectancy for consumers of prescribed psychiatric drugs.
 - The rate of deaths among those who are called "mentally ill" compared to an equal sample of the general population.
 - How many hundreds of those who are called "mentally ill" die every year due to the risks and the unwanted effects of the prescribed psychiatric drugs.
 - Why the state remains indifferent about those deaths.?(The rest of this section is about information this is wanting an opinion from politicians who represent the state not public officials. I think you need to make the difference clear.)
- We denounce psychiatric violence and repression, mechanical and chemical restraint, the intentions to create "quiet rooms for therapeutic isolation" (Do you not have these already? We call them seclusion rooms), the uncontrolled prescription of psychiatric drugs. We also denounce and call for the cancellation of court orders for compulsory confinement.
- We ask that in case we are in need of treatment, this process should be implemented in a way that respects our human rights and dignity?- We condone the public humiliation we undergo when we are

transferred to hospitals as criminals and not as every other citizen using the health services.

- We ask for the employees in the field of mental health to accept and come to terms with the above claims in their everyday practice and to defend our rights with us.

Every day we find that prejudice and fear prevent us from having a quality of life, even in the rare case that we do have a job – normally not worthy of our skills and abilities. As for our true social rehabilitation, it is thwarted by the strong prejudice existing in a large part of the society against people with psychiatric experience.

We address all “healthy” thinking citizens, parties and community authorities and we ask them to actively support our fight.

Above all, though, we address to all friends in Greece who are in the same place with us, and we ask them to respond to our call and enforce our movement.

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