

Program of Bologna Conference

# Transforming Mental Health Through Lived Experience

(7-8 May 2026)

Casa di quartiere Katia Bertasi\* | via Fioravanti, 18/3 | Bologna (Italy)

**Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2026**

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14:30 **Greetings from the Authorities**

- President of Navile District (Federica Mazzoni)
- Representatives of the Joint Action MENTOR: Dace Vintere, Project Coordinator, National Centre of Mental Health, Latvia; Gemma Calamandrei WP5 Coordinator, Italian National Institute of Health
- Representative of the Technical committee on mental health of the Italian Ministry of Health" tbc
- WHO Europe (Ledia Lazeri)
- Emilia-Romagna Region, Mental Health Directorate
- AUSL Bologna Mental Health Department (Fabio Lucchi)
- European Mentor Project/Task 5.3. (Jorg Utschakowski and Giuseppe Salamina)

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15:00 **Transforming mental health through lived experience**

Michael Ryan (Head of Mental Health Engagement and Recovery, Ireland)  
The role of Lived Experience in creating a Recovery Oriented Service (with reference to the "WHO Europe's Roadmap for integrating lived and living experience practitioners into policy, services and community" / European framework / the case of Ireland)

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15:30 Discussion

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15:40 Coffee break

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16:00 Participants will be divided in small groups in presence (one group will be online), one facilitator per group, discussing on the following topic:

**Are the actions in the WHO Road map the correct ones for your country/ organisation?**

See WHO Roadmap at:

<https://www.who.int/europe/publications/i/item/WHO-EURO-2025-12307-52079-79927>

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17:00 Plenary Q&A

18:00



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## Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2026

9:00	<b>Making Lived Experience Count</b> Lecture by Emma Watson (Programme Lead for Research, Evaluation, Publications and Development, Imroc)
9:30	<b>Implementation of the PLE in mental health services</b> At the level of psychiatric services, the implementation of PLE offers a variety of opportunities and challenges, which are to be discussed in this workshop. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>European Experience:</b> Jörg Utschakowski + Janni Kniep (Berlin)</li><li>• <b>Italian Experience:</b> Elena Faccio, Michele Rocelli, Ludovica Aquili (University of Padua), Luca Negrogno, Monica Maretti (Bologna) + 1 representative of AIPESP (Italy)</li><li>• (4 contributions in total, 20 minutes each)</li></ul>
10:50	Coffee break
11:00	<b>Group work on the following topics (one group online), one facilitator per group:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The role, identity and functions of PLE today, inside and outside of services.</li><li>• Employment of PLEs: a change of the entire organization</li><li>• Contextual conditions that favor or limit the implementation</li><li>• Comprehensive strategies to strengthen recognition and increase the influence of PLE on the planning, delivery and evaluation of mental health services</li></ul>
12:00	Plenary Q&A
12:30	Light Lunch
13:30	<b>What was my research journey? Reflections of researchers with lived experiences</b> By researchers with lived experiences from European countries
14:15	Advancing involvement, transforming knowledge: How and why we do service user/survivor and lived experience research Lecture by Sarah Carr (Vice-Chair of the UK National Survivor User Network UK)  Time for Q & A
15:00	Coffee break
15:30	Mapping lived experience research Four mini-inputs on themes such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Using one's own lived experiences in PHD projects</li><li>• The role of self-advocacy organizations for lived experience-research</li><li>• Research collaborations between persons with lived experiences with no academic background work and others with research degrees or research careers</li><li>• Institutional/organizational requirements for participatory or user-led research</li></ul> Panel discussion

16:30	<b>Dialogical input on collaborative research</b> Sebastian Von Peter and Jenny Ziegenhagen by members of the Co-Lab Medical School Brandenburg <a href="https://www.mhb-fontane.de/en/mental-health">https://www.mhb-fontane.de/en/mental-health</a>  Time for Q&A
17:10 17:30	Resume and farewell

## Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2026 - Departures

Please fill out the online form to apply for participation in the MENTOR International Conference by March 31: <https://bit.ly/Mentor-Bologna>



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\* The Katia Bertasi Neighborhood House is open to all residents and associations, offering welcoming spaces that host events, courses, workshops, and services. The House is a place of culture, socializing, and relaxation, where spontaneous connections are fostered between people of different ages and backgrounds.