



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)

Under the patronage of

In collaboration with ISS





Thursday 7th May 2026

14:30 **Greetings from the Authorities**

- President of Navile District, Bologna (*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*)
- WHO Europe (*Ledia Lazeri, Regional Adviser for Mental Health at WHO Regional Office for Europe*)
- Emilia-Romagna Region, Department of Health Policies (*Massimo Fabi*)
- AUSL Bologna Mental Health Department (*Fabio Lucchi*)
- European Mentor Project/Task 5.3. (*Jorg Utschakowski and Giuseppe Salamina*)

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

Panel discussion

15:40 **Coffee break**

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:



17:00 **Plenary Q&A**

<https://www.who.int/europe/publications>



Friday 8th May 2026

09:00 **Making Lived Experience Count**

Lecture by Emma Watson (Programme Lead for Research, Evaluation, Publications and Development, Imroc)

09:30 **Implementation of the PLE in mental health services**

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.

- European Experience: Jorg Utschakowski, Janni Kniep (Berlin), Nina Eck (Iceland)
- Italian Experience: Elena Faccio, Michele Rocelli, Ludovica Aquili (University of Padua), Luca Negrogno, Monica Maretti (Bologna), Rossella Monti (AIPESP President - Italy)

10:50 **Coffee break**

11:00 **Group work on the following topics (one group online), one facilitator per group:**

- The role, identity and functions of PLE today, inside and outside of services
- Employment of PLEs: a change of the entire organization
- Contextual conditions that favor or limit the implementation
- Comprehensive strategies to strengthen recognition and increase the influence of PLE on the planning, delivery and evaluation of mental health services

12:00 **Plenary Q&A**

12:30 **Light Lunch**

13:30 **What was my research journey? Reflections of researchers with lived experiences**

7 researchers with lived experiences from European countries



14:00 **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

14:45 **Coffee break**

15:15 **Mapping lived experience research**

- Imke Heuer (Germany): Self-advocacy organizations and lived experience research
- Diana Gonzalez-Mañas & Francisco José Eiroa-Orosa (Spain): Rethinking mental health practices and recovery pathways through citizenship in the Catalan mental health context
- Dr. Ugnė Grigaitė (Lithuania/ Portugal): Trauma, violence, and mental health: integrating survivorled knowledge within lived experience research
- Ann-Mari Lofthus (Norway): Establishment of a research institute for lived experience in Norway.
- Stefanía Guðrún Kristinsdóttir (Iceland): Social empathy as a framework for peer-led social innovation

Panel discussion

16:30 **Break**

16:40 **Dialogical input on collaborative research**

Ute Maria Krämer & Sebastian von Peter
(Co-Lab Medical School Brandenburg/ Germany)

Time for Q&A

17:20 **Resume and farewell**