Managing the Link and Strengthening Transition from Child to Adult Mental Health Care (MILESTONE)

Principal Investigator: Professor Swaran Singh
FP7 Cooperation Theme 1 - Health
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The Project
The MILESTONE project aims to improve mental health care in the EU for young people by focusing on a critical period: transition to adulthood. This is the period of onset of most of the serious mental disorders that disable or kill in adult life. Current service configuration of distinct Child and Adult Mental Health (CAMHS) and Adult Mental Health (AMHS) Services is considered the weakest link where the care pathway should be strongest. Transition-related discontinuity of care is a major socioeconomic and societal challenge for the EU.

The MILESTONE project is an EU-wide study determining care gaps in current services across diverse healthcare systems and robustly evaluating an innovative transitional care model. We will map current services and transitional policies across the EU; develop and validate transition-specific outcomes measures; conduct a longitudinal cohort study of transition process and outcomes across eight EU countries; develop and test, in a cluster-randomised trial, the clinical- and cost-effectiveness of an innovative transitional care model; create clinical, organisational, policy and ethics guidelines for improving care and outcomes for transition age youth; and develop and implement training packages for clinicians across the EU.

The project will provide strong evidence for the most cost-effective way to meet the as-yet-unmet need of young people who fall through the CAMHS-AMHS divide; facilitate the development of integrated models of care and function; improve health care outcomes and system efficiencies; and ensure take-up of best practice. Our results will assist policy makers in making informed and evidence-based decisions for improving health systems, enhancing patient outcomes, quality of life, service satisfaction, and improving health status at individual and population levels.

Other Participants
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Professor Swaran Singh’s Views on the Importance of EU Funding
“This is a Europe wide study, which aims to radically transform youth mental health across all 28 nation states in EU. The project is genuinely cross-cultural. We are mapping services, training and legal aspects of youth mental health in all 28 countries, conducting a large cohort study with a nested Randomized Controlled Trial in 8 countries and the findings will be generalizable and applicable across the EU.”
The UK has all the skills that we needed for this project. However the project is about understanding services in different national and health economy contexts. There is no UK funding source that would have been interested in this topic or be able to provide the necessary support; the Wellcome Trust does support international research but it does not fund this kind of applied health services research and neither NIHR nor MRC would have this topic in their remit. Hence it could not have been done without EU collaboration."