



Madrid, 3 November 2014

Press release

EMERALD: Global Mental Health Conference in Madrid

Madrid, 3 November 2014 –The EMERALD research project is holding its next major meeting in Madrid, Spain from 11-14 November 2014. During the meeting, as part of EMERALD’s efforts to improve mental health systems in 6 low- and middle-income countries, a series of training activities will be conducted for mental health professionals from Africa, Asia and Europe. The event will be hosted by the Department of Psychiatry, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid.

EMERALD stands for Emerging Mental Health Systems in Low- and Middle-Income Countries, and was launched in November 2012, funded by the European Commission for 5 years. Based on a strong partnership between mental health research experts from Europe and from six African and Asian countries (Ethiopia, India, Nepal, Nigeria, South Africa, and Uganda),—the project represents a major step forward in improving mental health systems and capacity-building for low- and middle-income countries.

All around the world, people with mental illness have limited access to treatment, and in many countries less than 10% of people with mental illness receive any effective treatment. In many low- and middle-income countries, there are insufficient resources to offer adequate care. Patients with depression, alcohol use disorders, schizophrenia and other mental illnesses are often left to the care of their families, causing severe economic and social disadvantage. EMERALD researchers are working to raise awareness, combat stigma and discrimination, and improve local and national health systems and policies.

EMERALD's main goals are to improve mental health outcomes in these six countries by generating evidence and training professionals and policy-makers as a basis for enhancing health system performance, thereby improving mental health care in these countries and narrowing the mental health treatment gap. The project aims to do so first by identifying key barriers to the effective delivery of mental health services, and then offering solutions for improved delivery in the future.

At the forthcoming Madrid conference, researchers will be discussing EMERALD's efforts during the first two years of the project in identifying key health system barriers to, and solutions for, the scaled-up delivery of mental health services in low and middle-income countries. Chaired by the project's leader, Prof. Graham Thornicroft of the Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience at King's College London, there will be several sessions for training of trainers workshops for more than 40 African and Asian professionals, who will bring this expertise to other researchers, policy-makers, service users and clinicians in their countries.

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For more information on our work, please visit our website: www.emerald-project.eu

Official Emerald logo: attached

Contact persons:

Emerald Project Partner in Spain Prof. Jose Luis Ayuso-Mateos □	Email: joseluis.ayuso@uam.es Phone: +34 91 4976522 □
Emerald Principal Investigator Prof. Graham Thornicroft □	Email: graham.thornicroft@kcl.ac.uk Phone: +44 207 848 0736
Project Management Dr. Stefanie Fülöp, GABO:mi Munich	Email: stefanie.fueloep@gabo-mi.com Phone: +49 89 288 104 34