

Advocacy Actions

- **Mental Health is an EU Public Health Priority**

Mental health is now being recognised as a public health priority in the European Union, notably in the European Commission President von der Leyen’s [State of the Union speech](#) at the European Parliament on the 14 September 2022. The eagerly awaited [European Commission Communication on A Comprehensive Approach to Mental Health](#) was published on the 7th June 2023.

EURORDIS has been advocating for the new Comprehensive Approach to Mental Health to be inclusive of all people in vulnerable situations, specifically the recognition of people with an existing health condition, such as chronic conditions and rare diseases. As the World Health Organization (WHO) has recognized “people with an existing health condition” as one of the main vulnerable groups who were more likely to develop symptoms of mental disorders following the pandemic, along with young people and women ([WHO 2022](#)).



[EURORDIS full response to the new Communication and the media statement](#)

[EURORDIS’ response elaborating on its full submission to the European Commission’s Call to Evidence](#)

[EURORDIS’s proposal to the European Commission for concrete proposals for the new Communication](#)

The new Commission Communication will be supported in the coming years with targeted community actions, initiatives and grants, providing **an opportunity to recognise the unmet needs and accumulative impact on mental health and wellbeing of people living with a rare disease and their families**, and to take concrete action across all policy areas to address these unmet needs.

• **EURORDIS objectives in the area of mental health are three-fold**

1

Prevent poor mental health through access to health promotion, prevention interventions, early detection and enhance continuity of care through improved access to and coordination of holistic care and access to high-quality psychological support services and treatments.

2

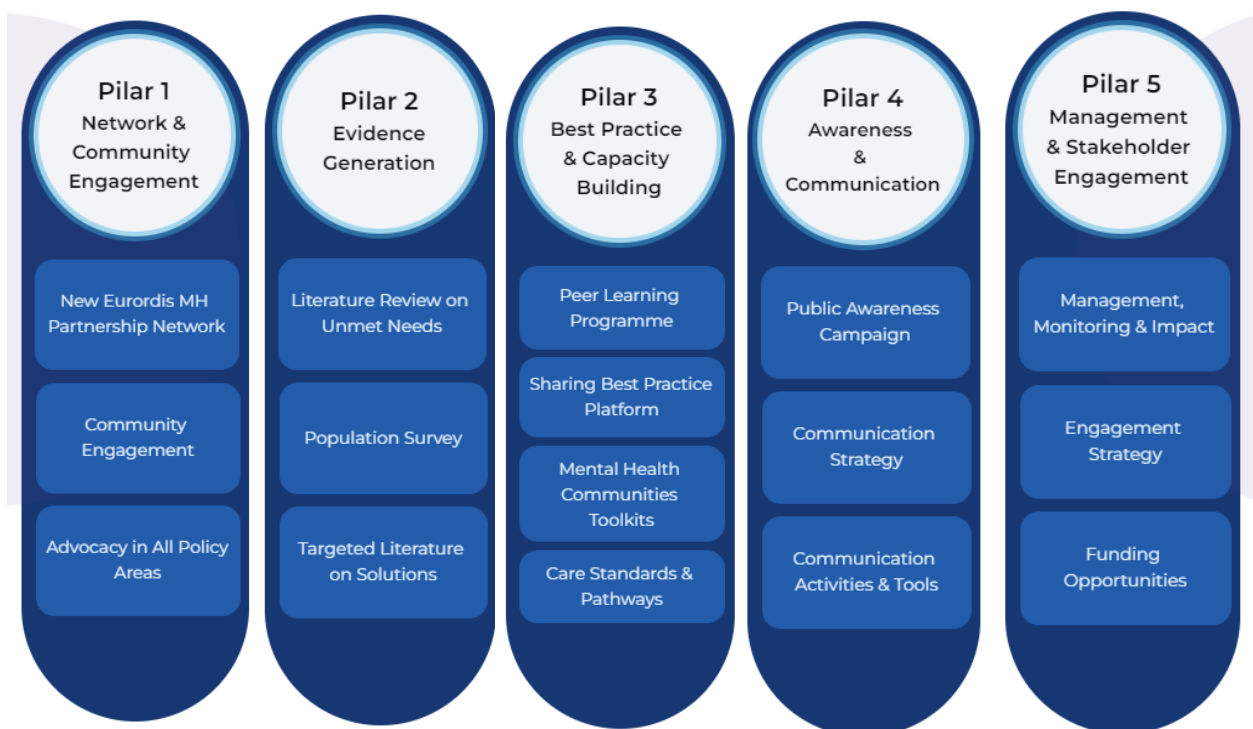
Improve availability and access to high-quality psychological support services and treatments and enhance continuity of care through improved access to and coordination of holistic care.

3

Strengthening EU and national system capacities, as well as services and professional competency, to understand the intersectoral needs between rare diseases and mental health, to optimise policies, practice, and interventions.

• **EURORDIS Action to Improve the Mental Wellbeing of the Rare Disease Community**

EURORDIS wishes to leverage the opportunity of the new Communication on a Comprehensive Approach to Mental Health to make visible the unmet mental health needs of people living with a rare disease and their families and take affirmative action to address these needs.



EURORDIS is establishing a new **EURORDIS Mental Health & Wellbeing Partnership Network** to support and coordinate of the development and delivery of community activities in the framework of **EURORDIS Mental Wellbeing Initiative**.