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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Just published: MHE study on the allocation of personal budget to people with mental health problems**

Mental Health Europe (MHE) has just released the final results of its survey on the allocation of personal budget to people with mental health problems.

***The survey was designed to determine whether people with mental health problems benefit from the "personal budget" that is allocated to people with disability and older people in various European countries.***

The term "*personal budget*" includes a variety of approaches which directly fund disabled and older people to employ their own personnel and organise their own care.

***The central idea behind the personal budget concept is to place the person who is supported, or given services, at the centre of the process and to give them the power to decide the nature of their own support.***

Alongside other stakeholders, MHE is campaigning for independent living, i.e. the shift from institutional to community-based services for people with mental health problems, and for a more equal relationship between mental health service users and service providers, where the former are enabled to manage their own personal support system. The wide survey on "*personal budget*" that MHE launched in November 2005 has been part of this effort.

***The final results of the survey make clear that there is still a long way to go in this respect.*** Yet, only a small number of countries provide a legal framework for personal budget. As might be expected, there are also various similarities and differences in the systems and approaches to personal budget prevailing in Europe. These reflect a range of priorities in the management of social and health care in European countries. The process is, however, moving forward and new developments are expected in some Member States.

***MHE believes that the issue of personal budget, whose aim is to enhance the independence of people with mental health problems, as well as disabled and older people, should be given greater consideration by European, national and local authorities and decision-makers.***

Personal budget brings in an essential transformation in the traditional relationship between service providers and service users. It offers to mental health service users a significant decision making responsibility and marks a distinctive move towards their empowerment and self-determination.

The study can be downloaded from the MHE website at:  
<http://www.mhe-sme.org/en/publications/reports.html>

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Mental Health Europe - Santé Mentale Europe is a European non-governmental organisation committed to the promotion of positive mental health, the prevention of mental distress, the improvement of care, advocacy for social inclusion and the protection of human rights for (ex)users of mental health services, their families and carers.