



**Running in the FAMILY -  
Understanding and predicting the  
intergenerational transmission of mental illness**

**Deliverable 9.6:**

Report on relevant outside initiatives and activities in the field and plan for collaboration

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## FAMILY

“Running in the FAMILY – Understanding and predicting the intergenerational transmission of mental illness”

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### Deliverable 9.6

Report on relevant outside initiatives and activities in the field and plan for collaboration

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## **SUMMARY**

This report offers a comprehensive overview of key external initiatives and projects within the mental health research domain, all relevant to the FAMILY project. It also underscores the significance of engaging with external projects to nurture collaboration, exchange knowledge, and propel the field forward. Furthermore, the report presents a strategic collaboration plan tailored to the identified projects. This plan outlines strategies such as resource sharing, joint workshop organization, and leveraging social media for dissemination. These strategies aim to create a cohesive network, amplifying the impact of collective efforts and contributing to a deeper understanding of mental health challenges. Through these targeted collaborative approaches, the report emphasizes the potential to drive positive change and enhance mental health research outcomes.

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Purpose and Scope

This document summarizes the key information, based on the grant agreement and the consortium agreement, about relevant outside initiatives and activities in the field and a plan for collaboration. Dissemination of FAMILY results shall be fostered through systematic networking and collaboration with other initiatives and EU projects in the field, including those funded within this topic and with overlapping aims. WP9 will organize and join calls and meetings with those other initiatives to agree on a plan to improve efficiency, create synergy and increase the impact of our programs.

## 1.2 References to other FAMILY Documents

- FAMILY Description of the Action (DoA), part A & B (confidential)
- FAMILY Dissemination & Communication Plan (public)

## 1.3 Definitions, Abbreviations and Acronyms

**Table 1 List of Abbreviations and Acronyms**

<b>Abbreviation/ Acronym</b>	<b>DEFINITION</b>
DoA	Description of the Action
ECS	Early career scientists
GA meeting	General Assembly meeting
PARADISE	Protected Area for Real Advancement of Discussion and Scientific Exchange

## **2 RELEVANT OUTSIDE INITIATIVES AND ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD**

### **2.1 Introduction**

Collaboration and engagement with external initiatives in the field of FAMILY's research area hold immense importance for the advancement of knowledge, the development of effective interventions, and the well-being of individuals and societies. Partnerships with other projects and organizations are crucial in the field of mental health research, due to various reasons:

#### **1. Complexity of mental health issues**

Mental health is a multidimensional and complex area of study. Collaboration allows researchers, clinicians, policymakers, and stakeholders from diverse backgrounds to pool their expertise, resources, and perspectives and work together to better understand the underlying mechanisms of mental illness and to develop sustainable disease interventions.

#### **2. Resource sharing and optimization**

Collaborating with external initiatives enables the sharing of research facilities, data, technologies, and methodologies. This optimizes the utilization of resources and minimizes duplication of efforts. By pooling resources, research organizations can conduct larger studies, access specialized equipment, and make better use of funding. All that goes in line with the European open science policy, making research results more accessible.

#### **3. Access to diverse populations**

Mental health issues vary across different populations, including age groups, ethnicities, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Collaboration with external initiatives enables access to diverse participant groups, facilitating research that is more representative. This diversity improves the generalizability of findings and the development of targeted interventions.

#### **4. Increase of awareness and impact**

Engagement with external initiatives serves as a powerful tool for increasing the prominence of all projects involved. Through channels like social media, conferences, workshops, or collaborative publications, the reach of research findings extends far beyond the usual audience and contributes to heightened visibility and a more informed and engaged crowd. By fostering

these cross connections, researchers effectively multiply the impact of their work, making it more accessible and influential.

#### **5. Policy and advocacy influence**

Collaboration between research initiatives and policy organizations strengthens the translation of research into effective policies and practices. Engaging with policymakers and advocacy groups ensures that research findings inform decisions, leading to better mental health support systems and public awareness campaigns.

#### **6. Long-Term Sustainability**







Collaboration fosters long-term relationships and partnerships. These relationships create a sustainable framework for ongoing research, development, and implementation of mental health interventions. This stability is essential for addressing the evolving challenges of mental health over time.

Ultimately, all of that will help the FAMILY consortium to reach the aim of improving the life of mentally-ill individuals and their families.

## 2.2 Landscape analysis and mapping of relevant initiatives and activities

### 2.2.1 Related projects from the EU call HORIZON-HLTH-2021-STAYHLTH-01

During the preparation phase of the FAMILY project, FAMILY has been in touch with related projects from the same call under the Horizon Europe framework and potential synergies and convergences were identified. The projects named below have agreed to jointly organize round tables and brainstorm sessions for researchers in all consortia, joint symposia submission at international conferences, and lab rotations for early-stage researchers.

Acronym	Project Title	Website	Logo
environMENTAL	Reducing the impact of major environmental challenges on mental health	<a href="http://www.environmental-project.org">www.environmental-project.org</a>	
HappyMums	Understanding, predicting, and treating depression in pregnancy to improve mothers and offspring mental health outcomes	<a href="http://www.happymums.eu">www.happymums.eu</a>	
Psych-STRATA	Psych-STRATA - A Stratified Treatment Algorithm in Psychiatry: A program on stratified pharmacogenomics in severe mental illness	<a href="http://www.psych-strata.eu">www.psych-strata.eu</a>	
R2D2-MH	Risk and Resilience in Developmental Diversity and Mental Health	<a href="http://www.r2d2-mh.eu">www.r2d2-mh.eu</a>	
Re-MEND	Building REsilience against MEntal illness during ENDOcrine-sensitive life stages	<a href="http://www.helsinki.fi/en/projects/re-mend/about-re-mend">www.helsinki.fi/en/projects/re-mend/about-re-mend</a>	
Youth-GEMs	Gene Environment interactions in Mental health trajectories of Youth	<a href="http://www.youth-gems.eu">www.youth-gems.eu</a>	



## 2.2.2 Related projects within other EU-funding frameworks

The following projects are funded within EU-frameworks. They either focus on similar research topics as FAMILY or aim to reach the same values. FAMILY partners are already involved in some of these projects, facilitating the contact and thus the planning of joint activities.

Acronym	Project Title	Website	FAMILY members involved
AIMS-2-TRIALS	Exploring the biology of autism to tailor treatments and develop new medicines	<a href="http://www.aims-2-trials.eu">www.aims-2-trials.eu</a>	X
DynaMORE	Dynamic Modelling for Resilience	<a href="http://www.dynamore-project.eu">www.dynamore-project.eu</a>	X
EarlyCause	Investigating the lifelong effects of early life stress on health	<a href="http://www.earlycause.eu">www.earlycause.eu</a>	X
EnGagE	Enhancing Psychiatric Genetic Counselling, Testing, and Training in Europe	<a href="http://www.cost-engage.eu">www.cost-engage.eu</a>	
I-RISK	From parental risk to child mental illness: a genetically informed investigation of intergenerational risk pathways	<a href="http://www.cordis.europa.eu/project/id/863981">www.cordis.europa.eu/project/id/863981</a>	X
LifeBrain	Healthy minds from 0 – 100 years	<a href="http://www.lifebrain.uio.no">www.lifebrain.uio.no</a>	X
MINDDS	Maximising the impact of research in NeuroDevelopmental DisorderS	<a href="http://www.mindds.eu">www.mindds.eu</a>	
PRISM2	Precision medicine for psychiatry: From brain function to behaviour	<a href="http://www.prism2-project.eu">www.prism2-project.eu</a>	X
RESPOND	Identifying and strengthening resilience factors in the COVID pandemic	<a href="http://www.cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101016127">www.cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101016127</a>	
ROSiE	Fostering responsible open science in Europe	<a href="http://www.rosie-project.eu">www.rosie-project.eu</a>	X
TIMESPAN	Management of chronic cardiometabolic disease and treatment discontinuity in adult ADHD patients	<a href="http://www.timespan.eu">www.timespan.eu</a>	
VIRT2UE	VIRT2UE aims to develop a sustainable train-the-trainer blended learning programme enabling tailored ERI teaching across Europe	<a href="http://www.cordis.europa.eu/project/id/787580">www.cordis.europa.eu/project/id/787580</a>	

### 2.2.3 Other initiatives, projects and activities

The following initiatives and projects share the same focus of interest as FAMILY.

Title	Type of initiative or project	Website	FAMILY members involved
SYNAPSY	SYNAPSY Centre for Neuroscience and mental health research, University of Geneva	<a href="http://www.unige.ch/medecine/synapsycentre/">www.unige.ch/medecine/synapsycentre/</a>	
ECNP	European College of Neuropsychopharmacology	<a href="http://www.ecnp.eu">www.ecnp.eu</a>	X
High risk research summit	Conference	<a href="http://www.tilmeld.dk/familial-high-risk-research-2023">www.tilmeld.dk/familial-high-risk-research-2023</a>	X
INPP	International Network for Philosophy and Psychiatry	<a href="http://www.inpponline.com">www.inpponline.com</a>	
Inspire the mind	Online blog; Editor in chief: Carmine Pariante (EarlyCause project)	<a href="http://www.inspirethemind.org">www.inspirethemind.org</a>	
Generation Scotland	Research study looking at the health and well-being of volunteers and their families	<a href="http://www.ed.ac.uk/generation-scotland">www.ed.ac.uk/generation-scotland</a>	
Psychiatric Genomics Consortium (PGC)	Organization with different working groups; focused on brain and mental disorders	<a href="http://www.pgc.unc.edu">www.pgc.unc.edu</a>	

## **2.3 Potential and ideas for collaboration**

The collaboration between FAMILY and related initiatives and projects is crucial for a sustainable use of knowledge, research and enhanced awareness about mental illnesses. The collaborations can be fostered through different strategies. In chapter 2.2 we have identified complementary projects that align with and complement the work of FAMILY. In this chapter, we will define clear objectives and goals of the potential collaborations.

### **2.3.1 Cross-project meetings**

Cross-project meetings offer numerous advantages that can significantly enhance the outcomes and impact of the involved projects. These advantages include knowledge exchange, possibility to identify synergies, networking, feedback and peer review, enhanced dissemination, as well as policy and practice influence. Besides that, building relationships through cross-project meetings can lead to ongoing collaboration even after the projects have ended.

### **2.3.2 Conferences and Workshops**

Some of the aforementioned initiatives regularly organize conferences and workshops. Attending such events from related projects, can provide opportunities for FAMILY to meet other researchers, learn about the latest research and results in the field, and also to share our own results. That way scientific discussion will be enhanced and especially face-to-face interactions can foster meaningful connections. Besides the event itself, the projects can help each other to share event details, e.g. abstract submission or registration date, before the event via social media platforms.

### **2.3.3 Guest lectures and masterclasses**

Researchers from different projects will be invited to give guest lectures or masterclasses to each other's project's team. This cross-pollination of ideas can lead to new perspectives and insights, sharing knowledge and experience and also opens opportunities for new future collaborations. Guest speakers can be invited to the annual General Assembly (GA) meetings or can be invited for online meetings as well. In case of FAMILY, there are regular online meetings where early, mid and senior career scientists meet to discuss methodology and findings, which the early career scientists (ECS) can list on their training portfolio. These meetings provide also an excellent opportunity to invite researchers from other projects.

### **2.3.4 Data and resource sharing**

If appropriate and possible, a collaboration on data sharing should be fostered, in line with the EU open science policy. Sharing data between projects can lead to more robust and comprehensive analyses, enabling deeper understanding of the research topic and all projects and the public will benefit from the

enhanced knowledge output. It needs to be ensured that ethical and legal considerations are addressed before sharing sensitive data. FAMILY is setting up such an infrastructure, first to accommodate data sharing within FAMILY but once a sustainability plan is in place it can be opened up to other initiatives.

### **2.3.5 Joint workshops and seminars**

Joint workshops, webinars or round table discussions can serve as platforms for researchers to present their work, exchange ideas, and, perhaps most importantly, provide feedback to each other. Open dialogue and constructive critique will be encouraged through such events. Especially for ECS this is a good training to present and discuss their research outside of their usual environment.

### **2.3.6 Joint patient events**

Joint patient events with related projects, e.g., R2D2-MH or Youth-GEMs, can be a tremendous asset for all projects involved. These events could provide a unique platform for researchers, clinicians, and patients to come together in a collaborative environment. The patient's experience offers valuable insights that can shape the research agenda, ensuring that studies are relevant and impactful. Moreover, joint patient events foster a sense of community and inclusivity. They empower individuals with mental health conditions by giving them a voice in the research process, reducing stigma, and promoting a patient-centred approach to care. Furthermore, such events have the potential to accelerate the dissemination of research findings, making them more accessible and understandable to a wider audience. This dissemination not only benefits the patient community but also aids policymakers and the general public in understanding the significance of mental health research.

### **2.3.7 Joint experiments, collaborative publications and lab rotations**

Conducting joint experiments and studies that involve researchers from multiple projects can lead to more comprehensive findings and help to validate results across different contexts. Co-authoring papers increases the visibility of each project's work and introduces it to a wider audience. Collaborative publications also bring together different perspectives, enhancing the overall quality of the research. Lab rotations provide a dynamic and enriching learning experience, especially for ECS, in order to learn new skills, build a professional network and explore different lab cultures. Beyond professional benefits, lab rotations can contribute to personal growth by exposing young scientists to new cultures, locations, and work philosophies.

### **2.3.8 Online collaboration platforms, social media and newsletter**

Using online platforms, social media and newsletters for dissemination and science communication of the research project offers numerous advantages, particularly when collaborating with related projects. Social media platforms provide a dynamic and accessible space to share latest research findings, insights, behind-the-scenes and updates in real time. Through collaborative efforts, researchers can

amplify their collective impact, reaching wider and more diverse audiences beyond traditional academic circles. These platforms foster engagement and interaction like no other medium, enable discussions, feedback and the exchange of ideas between researchers, crucial stakeholders and the general public. Collaborating projects can leverage each other's strengths, co-promote content, and cross-pollinate audiences, leading ultimately to increased visibility and recognition for all involved.

Overall, leveraging social media for science communication empowers collaborative projects to forge stronger connections, bridge knowledge gaps, and contribute to a more informed and engaged society.

### **2.3.9 Establishment of networks and thematic working groups**

The establishment of new networks and thematic working groups to focus on a specific aspect of the research topic can bring together scientists with diverse expertise and can accelerate progress on decision making and maybe influence new policies and guidelines.

### **2.3.10 Regular communication**

In order to achieve and gain the most value from the above-mentioned activities, regular communication with collaborators through meetings, emails, and virtual discussions should be maintained. Clear communication ensures that everyone is on the same page and contributes to a successful collaboration. By implementing these strategies, a research project like FAMILY can create a collaborative environment that enhances knowledge and awareness in the area of mental health and illnesses.

## 3 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

### 3.1 Collaboration opportunities in detail and implementation steps

The following part delves into ideas and implementation options for the FAMILY project. All points can be modified and fine-tuned as the project progresses. As new insights emerge and circumstances change, strategies to achieve the best possible outcomes may need to be refined and optimized.

#### 3.1.1 Cross-project meetings

The projects from the EU call HORIZON-HLTH-2021-STAYHLTH-01 (see 2.2.1), including FAMILY, aim to jointly organize round tables, to brainstorm and discuss synergies with researchers from all consortia. Regular STAYHLTH-01 cross-project meetings are planned (next meeting: 23 October 2023) and organized on behalf of the YOUTH-GEMs project. These cross-project meetings could be also used to plan joint patient events at the national level (see 2.3.6).

#### 3.1.2 Conferences and workshops

FAMILY partners and related initiatives have already implemented research symposia and conferences that happen on a regular basis, giving FAMILY the chance to showcase the work.

These are events from FAMILY partners and related initiatives:

- [International Symposium on Resilience Research](#), annual event, LIR Mainz, Germany
- [Epigenetic Inheritance: Impact for Biology and Society](#), bi-annual event, ETH Zurich, Switzerland
- [Familial High Risk Research Summit](#), bi-annual planned, location for 2025 to be announced

Existing collaboration between FAMILY and these events already includes enhanced communication of the event via the project's social media channels. Besides that, researchers from FAMILY have been attending these events.

#### 3.1.3 Guest lectures, masterclasses and joint workshops

FAMILY intends to extend invitations to guest speakers in upcoming GA meetings, aiming to feature keynote lectures and master classes. These guest speakers may include coordinators from other projects, such as Prof. Dr. Bart Rutten (Youth-GEMs) or Prof. Gunter Schumann (environMENTAL). The content from these keynote lectures and master classes can be recorded and post-produced and then used for dissemination. This collaborative approach between the projects would amplify the exposure of the resultant product (masterclass video), as it could be shared with the combined audiences of both projects.

Besides that, FAMILY will disseminate knowledge by training ECS through multidisciplinary academic training (methodologies, innovations, findings), provided within FAMILY's PARADISE meetings (standing for Protected Area for Real Advancement of Discussion and Scientific Exchange). This provides also an excellent opportunity to invite researchers from other projects as all researchers within FAMILY are invited to attend the PARADISE meetings.

### **3.1.4 Online collaboration platforms and social media**

Currently, FAMILY maintains social media channels for [X](#) (former Twitter) and [LinkedIn](#). On these channels, FAMILY is connected with other projects, such as DynaMORE, YOUTH-GEMs, environMENTAL, R2D2-MH project, Happy Mums, Early Cause (see also section 2.2). The projects engage with each other's posts by liking, sharing and reposting, thus improving visibility of the single project posts. Researchers from the single projects are also asked to engage with the project posts and social media sites, using their network to disseminate.

Furthermore, FAMILY plans an additional social media account: [FAMILY's Instagram account](#) will be launched on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2023 and also used to connect and engage with other projects and the public.

### **3.1.5 Establishment of networks and thematic working groups**

FAMILY is planning to build a new working group within the [ECNP network](#). Current ECNP working groups are, for example, Child and Adolescent Neuropsychopharmacology Network, Depression Meta Network, Digital Health Applied to the Clinical Research of Brain Disorders, Immuno-Neuro Psychiatry Network, Obsessive Compulsive and Related Disorders Network, Pharmacogenomics and Transcriptomics Network, Resilience Network and many more. The new working group, initiated by FAMILY scientific coordinator Neeltje van Haren, will be the ECNP Network Intergenerational Transmission and is currently in preparation.

## **3.2 Monitoring and evaluation**

The proposed implementation steps hold a big potential for enhancing collaboration among related initiatives and projects. By systematically monitoring and evaluating these strategies, we can measure their impact, identify successful practices, and continuously refine our approach.

Regular meetings play a pivotal role in sharing progress updates, aligning goals, and identifying synergies. To monitor and evaluate their impact, we will track participation levels, assess the alignment of meeting outcomes with project objectives and monitor the integration of discussed ideas into subsequent project activities.

To assess the effectiveness of the planned social media approach, we will monitor engagement metrics such as likes, shares, comments, and follower growth, analyse the reach of posts related to joint initiatives and evaluate the extent to which social media activities drive traffic to project websites or resources. Besides that, conducting comparative studies before and after implementing action items to gauge improvements in collaboration, visibility, and idea implementation can be used to evaluate the outcome.

The outcome and benefit of joint seminars, masterclasses and PARADISE meetings can be analysed by gathering feedback from attendees on the relevance and impact of the sessions. Besides that, measuring the number of participants from within and outside the projects can be used as a metric.



## **4 CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, this report has highlighted the significance of engaging with relevant outside initiatives and activities in the field of mental health. By actively participating in external projects, organizations, and networks, FAMILY can unlock a wealth of opportunities for collaboration, knowledge exchange, and collective impact. The diverse range of initiatives discussed underlines the richness of potential partnerships that can enhance our understanding of mental health issues and accelerate progress in this critical domain.

As we move forward, the outlined plan for collaboration serves as a strategic roadmap to foster interactions between FAMILY and other research projects in the field. The strategies proposed, such as sharing resources and expertise, organizing joint workshops, and leveraging social media, present a comprehensive approach to promoting collaboration and disseminating research findings effectively. By harnessing the power of collaborative efforts, we can collectively contribute to the advancement of mental health research, influence policy decisions, and improve the lives of individuals and communities affected by mental health challenges.

## **5 COLLECTING INFORMATION: INSIGHTS AND IDEAS FROM FAMILY PARTNERS**

The opportunities and potential actions presented in this report, encompassing insights into related initiatives and projects, as well as ideas for collaboration, were gathered from the collective input of all FAMILY partners. The information was collected via an online survey that solicited the perspectives and expertise of our partners. Through their active participation and thoughtful contributions, we have shaped a report that reflects collaboration opportunities with partners outside of the FAMILY project.

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