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USEFULNESS, USE AND UNDESIRABLE EFFECTS OF DIAGNOSIS OF MENTAL DISORDERS

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In her talk, Sigrid will focus on a number of aspects that arise as a consequence of an individual's diagnosis as suffering from a severe mental disorder, such as schizophrenia, and particularly how a diagnosis affects the wider family unit.

From the wider family perspective, the onset of any mental illness is very traumatic and frightening, resulting in total confusion, angst and upset for all members - the sufferer, parents and siblings. So when a diagnosis is finally made, a sense of relief prevails but soon this relief changes when a person realises the real impact of such a diagnosis - in other words, the longer term effects and changes which they will face. A lifetime sentence looms for many.

There is a critical need for information to help understand the illness, support and education to help develop one's coping skills, to name just a few issues. Also, a very negative result of someone being diagnosed as suffering with a mental illness is the onset of feelings of stigmatisation, discrimination and isolation. Sigrid will deal with these topics and will explore the efforts which EUFAMI has been employing to counter these.