

Call to action on mental health in heart failure

**Psychological support is necessary to improve outcomes
and ensure people live well with heart failure**

People with heart failure and mental health conditions such as anxiety and depression have worse outcomes and quality of life. To address this issue, the EU's comprehensive approach to mental health should:

- **Support the early detection of and intervention for mental health conditions in people living with heart failure**
- **Allocate EU funding to support Member States in building capacity for mental health support and exchange of best practice among heart failure nurses and clinicians**
- **Facilitate access to digital tools that can support mental health in people with heart failure**

**Depression, a major mental health condition, affects
more than 1 in 3 people with heart failure¹**

- People with both heart failure and depression are more than twice as likely to be readmitted to hospital² and are at a higher risk of premature death than people with heart failure who do not have depression.³
- Depression is the strongest predictor of a worse quality of life for people with heart failure, even more so than the severity of heart failure symptoms.⁴
- Depression could also increase the risk of heart failure in the general population.⁵

**Mental health interventions can improve outcomes
for people with heart failure, but they are rarely implemented**

- The overlap in symptoms between heart failure and mental health conditions can make identifying them challenging and requires careful assessment.⁶ Clinicians must be well equipped to detect mental health conditions in people with heart failure and refer them for further support if needed.
- Mental health interventions can reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease⁷ as well as improving exercise capacity,⁸ self-care and quality of life.^{9,10}
- Heart failure nurses are uniquely positioned to provide psychological support and person-centred care. Nurse-led digital health interventions, such as smartphone applications and web-based cognitive behavioural therapy, can facilitate the delivery of mental health support, improving outcomes.¹¹
- Digital health interventions can help people with heart failure feel more connected to their care team and more confident in their self-care.

OUR SUPPORTERS

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This call to action is part of the European Heart Failure Mission, an initiative by the Heart Failure Policy Network. If you would like to get involved in the Mission, please get in touch with us at:

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