



**Informal Scientific Network Statement**  
**Managing Psychiatric Comorbidities in Drug Use Disorders**  
**2 March 2020, CND 2020**

Considering that the majority of people with drug use disorders have additional mental health disorders, also referred to as psychiatric comorbidities, or dual disorders, the Informal Scientific Network reached the following recommendations:

1. Mental health disorders that include drug use disorders must be addressed as an integral part of Universal Health Care.
2. Policymakers should devise strategies to address the common bio-psychosocial factors that are associated with the development of dual disorders.
3. The high prevalence and related disability of dual disorders require active intervention from policymakers at a systems level and active advocacy from health professionals.
4. Service providers should be trained in the management of dual disorders and sufficient financial support should be granted for this purpose.
5. Systematic screening for other mental disorders through validated instruments by trained health service providers is an essential component of adequate care for people with drug use disorders.
6. Availability of and accessibility to adequate treatment should be provided, regardless of the entry point to care systems, in line with the principle of “no wrong door”.
7. Sex- and gender-based knowledge and a stigma-free approach are required in the effective management of psychiatric comorbidities in drug use disorders.
8. Age-specific interventions are required across the lifespan, especially for minors and the elderly.
9. Science-informed prevention interventions that address common risk factors, such as, early life adversity, should be available to children living with parents and/or caregivers with drug use disorders and mental health conditions.
10. Attention should also be given to other at-risk and vulnerable populations, in accordance with local needs.
11. Access to services for comorbid mental health and drug use disorders in the criminal justice system, in particular in prison settings, youth detention or correctional centres, should be secured.
12. The collection and analysis of data to monitor the magnitude of the problem, the quality of care and the outcomes of policies and interventions should be encouraged.
13. Implementation and scale up of effective and efficient interventions, in consideration of cultural and country specificities, is a priority.
14. Finally, the Informal Scientific Network urges Member States to further support scientific research on new and enhanced interventions that effectively prevent and treat psychiatric comorbidities in people with drug use disorders.