

What's New?

STEP-UP WEEKEND

From **29 June** until **2 July**, the STEP-UP weekend took place in Porto. **22 HIV advocates** had the opportunity to follow a 3-day training programme which was facilitated by our **QoL PC Member Julian Hows**. The sessions covered themes such as HIV and human rights, advocacy implementation, programme management and fundraising, as well as networking with local community members. **8 MOOC graduates** received mini grants to implement a project they had designed for their own community. Click [here](#) to read the blog post with photos!



[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER!](#)

EACS COMMUNITY SESSION ON HARM REDUCTION AND MENTAL HEALTH

The Mental Health and HIV project will hold a community session in collaboration with the SCOPE project. The session entitled **"Empowering communities and clinicians for harm reduction and mental health"** aims to amplify the voices of community on the topic, as well as foster dialogue between community and clinicians, as well as highlighting promising practices.

Happening on **Thursday, 19 October, 12:15-13:15**.

FILMING AT EACS!

MENTAL HEALTH CAMPAIGN ON STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION IS ON ITS WAY

The **HIV and Mental Health project** is setting up a follow up campaign to the EATG 2021 campaign 40 years of HIV/AIDS, which will further address **Stigma & Discrimination in healthcare settings**.

The campaign will raise awareness among **healthcare professionals** and **community** around intersectional stigma and discrimination faced by people living with HIV and affected communities and the impact it has on their mental health. The campaign aims to strengthen referral systems between healthcare professionals and non-medicalised services and peer-led programmes. The campaign will consist of a webpage, a social media campaign and a video campaign which will feature a community member, a community worker/psychologist and a doctor. The video will entirely be shot at **EACS** and include snippets of the community session!

WHAT'S NEXT?

- **EACS Community Session** on 19 October 2023, 12:15-13:15.
- **Shooting Mental Health Campaign:** 18 - 21 October 2023 at EACS.
- **QoL F2F meeting meeting** in Brussels: 29-30 October 2023.
- **Webinar on Mental Health within HIV Guidelines:** 9 November 2023, 17:00 - 18:30 CET.



SAVE THE DATE: Mental Health within HIV Guidelines – Webinar, 9 November 2023, 17:00 - 18:30 CET

During our two HIV and Mental Health webinars earlier this year, participants noted that some providers used outdated and stigmatising mental health approaches and diagnostic criteria. **This webinar** explores how **HIV and mental healthcare standards can be improved** across Europe and Central Asia. The webinar will be in English with live interpretation in Russian.

Agenda and registration will soon be available!

Click on the logo to join the **HIV & Mental Health platform!**

Meet the QoL Member: Axel Vanderperre

Who is Axel Vanderperre in a nutshell?

Living in Brussels, I am a LTS suffering from different comorbidities where neuropathic pain is impacting my quality of life. Being a biomedical engineer after 30 years working in clinical development & communications, my drive since 2016 is HIV advocacy to promote "health" education. Why? CARE to PLHIV (assessment, prevention of comorbidities) is still poor. ART is NOT sufficient. HIV impacts all organs with chronic inflammation, senescence...resulting in accelerated ageing. Therefore, I joined different HIV organisations, lastly the International Coalition of Older People living with HIV. I love medical science and my hobbies are painting, the sea, gym and good food.

What are your expectations from joining the Quality of Life Programme Committee?

The "diversity" of QoL committee members both with HIV advocates and experts and health professionals is amazing with different horizons, vulnerable experiences and strengths such as emotional, and behavioral "flexibility". This is good ground to "build" on, develop further a strong team and spirit and gradually integrate more science (public health & medical science) and methodology in the QOL strategy with a focus I hope on education and well-being. My aim is to cooperate in promoting "prevention, e-learning, healthy ageing and health span, self-care and resilience".



Axel is currently a member of both **Quality of Life** and **Partners in Science Programmes Committees**.