



PRESS RELEASE

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Mental Health Promotion and Intervention in Occupational Settings (MINDUP) – Addressing the Impacts of COVID-19 on Mental Health and Wellbeing in Small and Medium Enterprises

The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic are far reaching and long lasting for people working in Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in terms of people's wellbeing and mental health and the social and economic impacts.

The EU-funded large-scale **MINDUP** project ("Mental Health Promotion and Intervention in Occupational Settings") began in January 2020. **MINDUP** aims to improve mental health and wellbeing in the workplace by developing, implementing and evaluating a multilevel intervention targeting both prevalent psychiatric disorders (depression, anxiety disorders) and non-clinical aspects of mental health (stress, burnout, wellbeing, depressive symptoms).

Considering the short-term and long-term impacts of COVID-19, including staff stress and anxiety, reduced quality and perhaps intensity of care for those with mental disorders, or other impacts associated with the COVID-19-crisis, the **MINDUP** project is timely while it offers to SMEs support and intervention tools with a specific focus on alleviating depression and anxiety among staff.

The **MINDUP** Consortium, coordinated by Prof. Ella Arensman, Dr Birgit Greiner, School of Public Health and National Suicide Research Foundation, University College Cork, consists of 17 international partners, including the European Alliance Against Depression

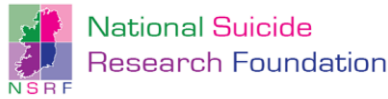
MINDUP will design interventions targeted at and delivered to SMEs, starting with three specific sectors; construction, healthcare and Information and Communications Technology (ICT). Research has consistently shown that people in these sectors have poor mental health and an elevated risk of suicide. **MINDUP** merges experts in mental health, suicide prevention, depression, stigma, implementation science, health economics and other interdisciplinary fields from Albania, Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Kosovo, The Netherlands, Spain, the United Kingdom and the USA.

Prof. Arensman states that, *"Taking into account the severe impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in the short and long term, MINDUP is a timely initiative while it will provide supports and resources to staff at all levels of SMEs to improve wellbeing, mental health and coping with stress"*.

while Prof. Hegerl states;

"For both mental well-being and mental health there is a great need for improvement especially considering the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and MINDUP aims at supporting SMEs to implement efficient measures".

One of the **MINDUP** partners, the European Alliance Against Depression, operates an online self-management programme, the **iFightDepression**[®] tool, which is offered for free to people with milder



forms of depression. The programme is suitable for adults and young people and consists of workshops) that focus on increasing and structuring daily activity, identifying and challenging unhelpful thought patterns, monitoring mood, adopting healthy sleeping patterns and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. As part of its work, **MINDUP** aims to enhance and tailor this programme to those in workplace settings.

The European Alliance Against Depression has established open access to the programme for the acute phase of the current crisis to relieve health care systems in Europe and beyond.

For further information about iFightDepression® please visit www.ifightdepression.com. If you would like to sign up for the open access version of the tool, please send a registration request to:

- openaccess.ifightdepression@eaad.net for the English tool version
- ifightdepression@deutsche-depressionshilfe.de for the German tool version
- uneluftojdepressionin@gmail.com (Kosovo) or uneluftojdepressionin.al@gmail.com (Albania) for the Shqip tool version

Learn more about the MINDUP project, consortium partners and related research:

<https://www.mindupproject.eu/>

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