

*Where is my sparkling daughter  
with flowers in her hair  
and birds on her shoulders  
her spell-binding laughter  
echoing in the dawn.  
They that she was vulnerable  
and promised to treat her well!  
Instead they ruined her sparkle  
At last they took her life*

"For all the people who have and still fight in psychiatric treatment".  
Dorrit Cato Christensen 2010

## The Association **Død i psykiatrien**

### Contacts:

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## **Død i Psykiatrien** ("Dead in Psychiatric Care")

"Mike got psychotic symptoms during his education to be a constructional engineer. He was diagnosed schizophrenia, when he was in his early twenties. For years he was treated with large amounts of antipsychotic drugs. During his many years in treatment, many danger signals. As late as four months before Mike died a blodtest showed that he had ten times the advised level of antipsychotic drug in his blood. For his mother there is no doubt Mike dies from the psychiatric treatment." Mike died of medical poisoning, age 42

*Mike* born 23/10/1964  
Died in treatment 18/5/2007



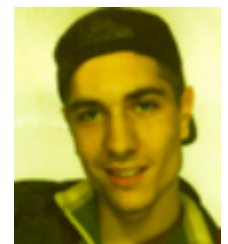
Luise was admitted for psychiatric evaluation in 1992. After 10 days she almost died from overprescribed medication. The diagnosis was paranoid schizophrenia. Luise was prescribed most of the available antipsychotic drugs, and just before her death she received four different types of antipsychotics and several other medications – in amounts far in excess of the recommended doses. Luise died of medicinal poisoning, age 32.



*Luise* born 29/8/1972  
Died in treatment 15/7/2005

Davide's original diagnosis in 2001 was formulated thus: 'As far as can be judged... apparently, there is a possibility of incipient schizophrenia.' After two years of treatment Davide's condition was still diagnosed as non-specific schizophrenia. At the time of his death David had been administered three different antipsychotic drugs and two other medications. He suffered from many side effects. He was 19 when he died of medicinal poisoning.

*Davide* born 7/3/1984  
Died in treatment 13/4/2003



A group of family and friends of young people who have died while in psychiatric treatment have founded the association ***Død i psykiatrien***. These families are left alone with their grief, loss and hopelessness. The association aims to create a forum for them to share their experiences and demand changes to the treatment modalities that led to the death of their loved ones.

The Association's aims are to:

- Draw attention to the high mortality rates among mentally ill patients being treated with psychiatric medications
- Reveal the dangerous side-effects of these medications and spread awareness of mental health therapies that focus on recovery
- Change the law so that psychiatrists and doctors will have to comply with the existing guidelines for prescription of psychoactive pharmaceuticals so that treatment is made safer and side effects are better monitored
- Work to establish legislation that ensures that mental health practitioners are held fully responsible and accountable for any negligence
- Combat the stigma that haunts mental health patients and their families by establishing clear rules and open dialog, as well as full access to hospital chart notes and documentation
- Help family members who have initiated or are considering a malpractice lawsuit

Learn more about the association ***Død i psykiatrien*** at [www.doedipsykiatrien.dk](http://www.doedipsykiatrien.dk)

### ***Facts about mental health care:***

Between 2003 and 2007 a total of 823 sudden, unexplained deaths related to psychosis or depression were recorded. <sup>1</sup>

In a comparison study the Danish Medicines Agency received reports from mental health facilities of 46 fatalities from 1997 to 2008 where psychoactive medicine given to patients was the suspected cause of death. The Agency admits, however, that it does not receive reports of all cases. <sup>2</sup>

Topping the list of implicated drugs are Seroquel, Zyprexa, Seroquel and Leponex.

Schizophrenic patients have a 4.9 times higher-than-average risk of sudden death. <sup>3</sup>

From 2002 to 2006 the consumption of antipsychotic drugs has risen 24 %. The number of people in treatment has risen by only 1.6 % in the same period. <sup>4</sup>

The side effects of antipsychotic drugs are very serious and often irreversible. Medications are a contributing factor to the reality that life expectancy for the mentally ill is 25 years less than normal.<sup>5</sup>

From 30% to 50 % of schizophrenic patients are prescribed more than one antipsychotic drug, and around 45 % are also treated with anti-anxiety drugs of the benzodiazepine family. In several documented cases this has occurred in contravention of Board of Health guidelines.

The belief that only medication works is wrong. Drugs are totally ineffective in 8 % of patients with delusions and hallucinations. <sup>6</sup>

Factors that promote recovery: hope, social relations, absence of stigma, minimal medication, a meaningful life, work ..... <sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Danish National Board of Health Annual Register of Deaths

<sup>2</sup> Danish Medicines Agency

<sup>3</sup> Mental Health North Denmark Region

<sup>4</sup> The Journal *Helse* (Health)

<sup>5</sup> Morbidity and Mortality in People with Serious Mental Illness. Edit. Joe Parks et al.

<sup>6</sup> Danish National Board of Health guidelines December 2000

<sup>7</sup> Slogan from LAP's web site, article by Swedish researcher in Recovery: Allan Topor

## Application to join the association *Død i psykiatrien*

Click here to sign up on the Association's web site: [www.doedipsykiatrien.dk](http://www.doedipsykiatrien.dk)

Or complete and mail this form.

Membership of the Association *Død i psykiatrien* is for family and friends of people who have died while in mental health treatment and for family and friends of people who are in mental health treatment.

People interested in promoting the Association's work and who subscribe to its aims can sign up as Support Members. Other organisations can also apply to become collective Support Members under the same conditions. The Association is independent of all political, practitioner-based, religious and economic interests.

I wish to subscribe to *Død i psykiatrien*:

I agree to the Association's aims (tick box):

I am a victim's family member (tick box):

I am applying as a Support Member (tick box):

Name:

.....

Address: .....

Tel: ..... Mobile:.....

e-mail: .....

Mail form to:

Dorrit Cato Christensen, Brumleby 160, DK -2100 Copenhagen Ø

Annual subscription of kr. 100 should be paid into the associations; bank account:

Bank reg. no. 2104, account no. 6273-770-176