

## **The Flemish suicide prevention action plan**

Concerning disease prevention, the Flemish government works with health targets. In December 2002 a health conference concerning prevention of depression and suicide was organised by the Flemish authority. This resulted in a proposal of a new Flemish health target: 'the mortality by suicide must decrease with 8% in the year 2010 compared with the year 2000, with the following additive targets: a decrease of the number of suicide attempts, a decrease of the suicidal ideation and a decrease of the number of depressions. During this conference different strategies were selected. Each strategy was grouped into five global strategies and described in a concrete action plan. The first strategy is the mental health promotion (f.e prevention of mental disorders, intention agreements with sectors outside the health sector and mass campaign). In the second strategy we focus on optimising the tele-care (telephone and internet assistance). A third strategy is education of health workers and optimising of the network. A fourth strategy consist of influencing the factors that can provoke a suicide. (the press and availability of deadly means). And finally a fifth strategy concerns risk groups such as suicide attempts, young people, surviving dependants, gay and lesbians. Important conditions which certainly must be fulfilled to battle this objective is a multiple policy approach (within the Flemish and the federal government), harmonisation with local initiatives, registration and evaluation and finally further scientific research.