

Medical Peace Work: further developments

Partnering to conceptualize the term Medical Peace Work (MPW), European IPPNW-affiliates together with representatives of other health NGOs and teaching institutions have since 2005 worked to define the role and responsibility of health practitioners in peace work.

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MPW encompasses much more than peace building in violent conflicts; it also refers to the many different ways in which health practitioners contribute to preventing violence and promoting peace, for instance through disarmament, human rights or sustainable development work.

In addition to exploring the range and mechanisms of such work, the MPW project entails collecting and cataloguing existing knowledge and experience in this field. It therefore works both as a competence-building initiative, and a quest to improve the effectiveness of the important work which IPPNW-affiliates and likeminded organisations are already conducting.

MPW I - an EU-funded pilot project

From 2005 to 2008, eleven European partners (among them the German and the Dutch IPPNW, as well as Medact) received funding from EU's Life Long Learning programme 'Leonardo da Vinci'. The pilot project resulted in the freely available MPW online course and a collection of many other training resources for health practitioners in peace issues.

The online course offers an introduction to Medical Peace Work. It comprises seven different modules:

- Module 1: Peace, conflict and health professionals
- Module 2: Medicine, health and human rights

- Module 3: War, weapons and strategies of violent conflict
- Module 4: Structural violence and the underlying causes of violent conflict
- Module 5: Peace-health interventions in armed conflict
- Module 6: Refugee and migration challenges
- Module 7: Inter-personal and self-directed violence

All seven modules consist of text book lessons, standardised test questions and problem-based e-learning cases in which the student, through pictures and videos, is challenged with difficult situations.

MPW II has recently started

Over the next two years, the MPW partnership will further develop the online course and web site with training resource. The plan is to transform the seven modules into shorter stand-alone courses and to adapt them to new user groups. We will also focus on the dissemination and the accreditation of the MPW course material in relation to vocational training and continuous education systems of health practitioners across Europe.

For further information, please check www.medicalpeacework.org

