

## Cyprus

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### **Research.**

There are few research projects running in Cyprus in regard to Health Psychology discipline. These are:

1. The "ALGEA" project is a new multilevel research approach for the study of chronic pain patients in Greece and Cyprus. It is currently conducted by members of the recently established ACTHealthy lab- an experimental as well as Clinical Health Psychology laboratory, hosted in the department of Psychology, at the University of Cyprus. The lab mainly consists of Clinical and Educational Psychology graduated students. Main academic and clinical interests of the lab are the development and expansion of behavioral medicine theories and treatments for a wide range of health-related problems and chronic illnesses. Acceptance and Commitment Therapy and contextual-based theories are the core therapies being examined to various protocols in the lab.

Different European and local funded projects are currently taking place such as Smoking cessation interventions for adolescences, new therapeutic modalities for chronic pain, psycho-social support for patients with Thalassemia and other serious illnesses.

Currently one of the cutting-edge funded projects of the ACTHealthy lab is the "ALGEA" project. Primary aim of this project is the creation of a new Behavioral Medicine environment for chronic pain patients and their families, by incorporating the needs of local health services providers and communities in Greece and Cyprus including – patients, family members, doctors, health and support organisations etc. The study is funded by The Cross Border Cooperation (CBC) Programme "Greece- Cyprus" and through government funds from both countries. It uses a multidisciplinary approach which combines both psychological support and pharmacotherapy as treatment for chronic pain. The study aims, to make use of critical factors that have been shown to be associated with chronic pain rehabilitation programs.

Thus, ALGEA project aims at creating new methods of chronic pain assessment, investigating innovative Clinical Healthy Psychology treatment plans and group-based interventions, as well as user-friendly web-based therapeutic modalities. For the development of this new interventions, existing knowledge, feedback from patients in Greece and Cyprus, new theoretical models such as the Psychological Flexibility model for chronic pain and the Acceptance & Commitment model, and most importantly new treatment methodology applicable to treating patients with chronic conditions, will be used. The University of Cyprus, the University of Crete and the Cyprus Institute of Neurology and Genetics, work together as a multidisciplinary team in order to provide specialization for good quality outcomes.

2. Quasi experimental research project as an expansion from a funding from European Regional Structural Funds and Republic of Cyprus on health care professionals' self-regulation skills, clinical communication in relation to patients' satisfaction. The project involves nurses from Cyprus general public hospitals and expanded recently in the hospitals of the private sector. The results have shown that teaching self-regulation skills to health care professionals not only increase patients' satisfaction but also improve nurses' self-efficacy

and satisfaction from work. We are now also investigating other parameters such as burn out and emotional exhaustion in relation to health care professionals' self-regulation skills.

Finally, the preparations for the Synergy expert meeting in Cyprus in 2015 are well underway. The expert meeting will be held over 2 days: 31st August-1st September 2015 (Monday and Tuesday respectively) and the title of the upcoming meeting is: Mhealth for behaviour change: opportunities, challenges and future directions. The meeting will be facilitated by Profs Lucy Yardley, Susan Michie and Robert West. Further details about the meeting will be uploaded soon on Synergy's website <http://ehps.net/synergy/>