PRESS RELEASE

2nd Joint Clinical Workshop "Brain and Mental Health: Innovation, Equity, and Impact"

Thessaloniki, Greece | March 20, 2026

The 2nd Joint Clinical Workshop, titled *"Brain and Mental Health: Innovation, Equity, and Impact,"* took place on Friday, 20 March 2026, in Thessaloniki, Greece. This is the second workshop in a row, bringing together researchers, technology developers, and healthcare providers to foster knowledge exchange and enhance collaboration in advancing equitable and innovative mental healthcare solutions across Europe. Held during **Brain Awareness Week**, highlighting the importance of raising awareness and promoting research in brain health.

The workshop organised as part of three EU-funded projects: EQUICARES, 2D-BioPAD, and COMFORTage, with moderation provided by Q-PLAN. Hosted at the South-East European Research Centre (SEERC), it attracted a diverse audience from across Europe both onsite and online. Participants included representatives from organisations such as **CERTH**, **SEERC**, **European Health Telematics Association (EHTEL)**, **Fundación INTRAS**, **Ana Aslan International Foundation**, **Alzheimer Hellas**, **National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA)**, **ICS-FORTH**, **European Brain Council (EBC)**, **AUTH**, **Papanikolaou Hospital of Thessaloniki**, **CyberEthicsLab**, and other key actors from research, healthcare, and innovation ecosystems.

The event opened with welcome remarks and was followed by talks on research and innovation in brain and mental health. Speakers representing the organising projects, along with related initiatives such as HPV Faster-Implement and SP-EU discussed key topics such as access to mental healthcare, trends in health services, and support for underserved groups.

A second session focused on clinical research in EU-funded projects. Experts shared their work on clinical studies, the use of technology in research, and new approaches to improving access to healthcare. Participants also joined a round table discussion on innovation in clinical brain and mental health research. The session explored how new technologies and research can be used in real-world settings.

The workshop concluded with an open discussion and a networking session, offering participants the opportunity to connect, exchange ideas, and explore future collaborations. Discussions also emphasized the potential of establishing this joint workshop as an annual initiative, reinforcing ongoing efforts to build strong partnerships and promote fair access to brain and mental healthcare for all.

Figure 1. Joint workshop between the EU-funded EQUICARES, 2D-BioPAD, and COMFORTage.

As we say: ***"…together we can do so much more!"***

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