Impact of austerity on families with disabled children in Europe

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Background

• Political response across Europe to 2008 financial crisis:
  – Austerity measures
  – Cuts to welfare benefits and public services

Aim

• To determine the impact of austerity on families with disabled children across Europe:
  • Direct experience of families
  • Indirect impact on families of cuts in services for disabled children
Methods and Responses

- Survey of EACD national coordinators Oct 2016
  - 28 responses

- E-surveys open December 2016
  - 25 languages
  - For three months

- 958 professionals from 32 countries

- 731 families from 23 countries
Families demographics (n=728 from 23 countries)

- Can care for themselves: 12%
- Can partly care for themselves: 37%
- Completely dependent on others: 50%
- Not stated: 1%

Location:
- Big City: 28%
- Village: 28%
- Town: 37%
- Not stated: 1%

Dependency:
- [CATEGORY_NAME]: 55%
- [CATEGORY_NAME]: 45%

- Rural Community: 6%
Direct impact on families of cuts in services and/or welfare support (Professionals n=959 from 32 countries)

Austerity (n=424)
- Yes: 73%
- No: 27%

No austerity (n=535)
- Yes: 55%
- No: 45%

p<0.001
Worse working conditions in last year
(Professionals: n=959 from 32 countries)

Austerity (n=424)

- Yes: 61%
- No: 39%

No austerity (n=535)

- Yes: 49%
- No: 51%

p<0.001
In the last three years families report..

- Increased waiting times: 39% (288/731)
- Access to therapists more difficult: 52% (379/731)
- Access to welfare support and benefits more difficult: 57% (415/731)
- Worse quality of services: 91% (667/731)
ALL family groups reported health, education and social care needs less well met now vs ten years ago.

Professionals from countries with no austerity cuts reported improvement in how well health, education and social care needs met vs ten years ago.

Professionals from countries with austerity cuts reported DECLINE in how well health, education and social care needs met vs ten years ago.
Professionals and families across Europe report decline in service access and quality regardless of austerity.

Austerity cuts have impacted negatively on families with disabled children across Europe.