EuroHeart project

Women and CVD
Awareness programmes

- Objectives
  - Analyse existing awareness raising campaigns / programmes targeting women and CVD
- 3 Questionnaires sent to
  - 25 organisations (17 heart foundations, 8 cardiac societies)
  - Representing 19 countries
- Questionnaires deal with
  - Campaigns targeting women
  - Campaigns targeting health professionals
  - Information on gender equity
1. Campaigns and or programmes on women and CVD targeting women

- Over 40 campaigns from 14 countries
- Mainly media campaigns, brochures/posters and workshops/conferences
- Some campaigns not specific on women and CVD
  - Women in general, with one focus on CVD
  - CVD in general, with one focus on women

1. Campaigns on Women and CVD

- Aims:
  - Awareness raising (among women & health prof.)
  - Disease prevention / health promotion / reduction of mortality from CVD
  - Promotion of rehabilitation programmes among women
  - Promotion of healthy lifestyle
- Sustainability of the campaign
  - Not a consideration for all campaigns
  - Long term visibility in the media
  - Increasing partnerships with other organisations
- Media coverage
  - Traditional media
  - Internet / email more and more often in recent campaigns
- Timeline
  - Campaigns from mid 90ies till now
1. Campaigns on Women and CVD

- **Target audience**
  - Women in general
  - Women with CVD risk
  - Women after 1st infarction or in rehab

- **Age related**
  - Age not specified in all campaigns
  - Menopause – post menopause
  - Recent campaigns: younger women (25 – 30)

- **Ethnic groups**
  - Most campaigns: « no »

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1. Campaigns on Women and CVD

- **Evaluation**
  - IF evaluation is done, it is mostly quantitative (number of brochures, number of interviews, number of participants,...)
  - Most campaigns are lacking evaluation of
    - Outcome of the campaign (did you reach your target group,...)
    - Impact of the campaign (raised awareness, behaviour change,...)
  - Reasons:
    - Lack of budget
    - “Impossible to measure...”
    - Campaigns are still ongoing, which explains why no evaluation is done so far
    - Not taken into consideration at start of campaign.
1. Campaigns on Women and CVD

Cooperation with other organisations:
- If campaign organised by heart foundation/cardiac society
  - Most campaigns: Heart Foundations alone
  - 15 campaigns involved health professionals as well
  - In most cases no cooperation structure in place
- Funding
  - Mostly heart foundations
  - Otherwise: cardiac societies, companies, government institutions, research centres

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1. Campaigns on Women and CVD

Cooperation with other organisations:
- If campaign not organised by heart foundation/cardiac society
  - Campaigns organised by government institutions, sports organisations, « alcohol control organisations », other health organisations,...
  - In most cases no cooperation structure in place
- Funding
  - Campaigns funded by organisers
  - Otherwise: cardiac societies, companies, government institutions, research centres
2. Educational programmes on women and CVD targeting health professionals

- 14 campaigns from 10 countries
- General questions on gender issues
  - 6 countries have gender issues included in curriculum for students
  - Gender issues often NOT included in cardiology training programmes
  - Similar for other medical specialisations
  - Some countries point out that gender issues can be included in continued medical research but not in a systematic way

2. Programmes for health professionals

- Objectives
  - Increase awareness among health professionals (most frequent answer)
  - Increase awareness on need for research
  - Increase awareness on need for gender specific training
- Sustainability of programmes
  - Does not seem to be an objective, except in case of academic courses
- Target audience
  - Health professionals (all campaigns)
  - Patients (1 campaign)
2. Programmes for health professionals

- Barriers to implementation of programmes on women and CVD
  - Women and CVD is dismissed as not relevant (by health professionals)
  - Lack of funding
- Promotion of programmes
  - Traditional ways (media, television, press conferences, internal mailings, etc)
  - Limited use of internet / email
- Timeline
  - 1990ies - now

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2. Programmes for health professionals

- Evaluation
  - Often not part of original set up (funding issue)
  - Impact, change in attitude, behaviour, etc not measured in a systematic way
2. Programmes for health professionals

- Organisations involved
  - Programmes run by cardiac societies / heart foundations
    - Limited cooperation with other organisations
    - Some programmes in parallel with public awareness campaigns
    - Funding by organisers of the programme, or business partners or participants (limited)
  - Programmes NOT run by cardiac societies/heart foundations
    - Only 3 programmes described,
    - Funding via organisations responsible for the programme

3. Gender specificity

- General remarks
  - Confusion between “gender diversity” and “equal rights” or “equal treatment”

- Working groups on gender diversity
  - Exist only in few organisations

- Campaigns / programmes on CVD
  - Often not made gender specific

- Other campaigns (e.g. on smoking, use of alcohol, health promotion in general, etc)
  - Often not made gender specific
3. Gender specificity

- Funding / publishing of research
  - General remark: most participating organisations do not fund/publish research
  - Inequalities: mostly not considered
  - Call for tender: gender specificity mostly not considered
  - Editorial board considering gender issues: yes
  - Editorial board including women: 7 no or no answer. 7 yes
  - Opportunities to present research
    - Conferences, publications, awards,

Conclusions

- Over 60 awareness campaigns addressing the particular issue of women and cardiovascular diseases have been organised in the last 20 years in the 19 countries participating in WP 6 of the EuroHeart project.
- National Heart Foundations and Cardiac Societies are well aware of the urgent need to raise awareness among women and health professionals alike.
- It is possible to raise awareness of the fact that cardiovascular diseases are the main cause of death in women and that women have different symptoms than men.
- Not all campaigns are evaluated, and the evaluation is mostly quantitative. Increased awareness is measured in very few cases only.
- In most countries, there seems to be a lack of systematic inclusion of gender-specificity in the training of cardiologist, which is a concern.