

Researchers Protest against Shutdown of Leeds Centre for Men's Health

It is with dismay and concern that we have learnt that it is planned to close the Centre for Men's Health at Leeds Beckett University in August 2017. This is a huge setback not only for gender studies and critical research on men and masculinities, but for medical, sociological and psychological research as a whole. The Centre has a very high reputation on the European level and beyond.

We have collaborated in very fruitful ways with researchers in the Centre on the issues of men's health and its connections to gender equality, violence prevention, and the enhancement of well-being for all genders. The Centre's fantastic work on the Report "The State of Men's Health in Europe" was ground-breaking: for the first time, data on men's health in all European countries were analysed in a comprehensive and comparative way. Its results show the high costs that some forms of masculinity, men's lifestyles and the lack of care bring to men themselves.

We gather that the reason for the closure is that the University seeks to restructure on economic grounds. Thus, the benefits of work of the Centre for Men's Health, and indeed its overall social and economic value seem to be underrated. Indeed, even seen narrowly in these terms, its important work

brings economic and cost savings for the wider society, the city, region and community, public services, businesses and civil society well beyond the University.

There are many good reasons to keep and develop the Centre for Men's Health: Men's health issues are about to become not only more recognized, but also more relevant. They are not only related to health itself, but to gender and gender (in-)equality in society (also because of the impact of men's poor health on women and children), to social innovation and to social development. Moreover, research has revealed a need for cross-disciplinary cooperation on methodological development, for example in terms of improved health variables in other research, and vice versa, in terms of improving health variables and indexes from gender and gender equality studies.

The Centre has proved to be an excellent partner in all these discussion and areas of research. We hope that there will be ways to continue its work. We ask the representatives of Leeds Beckett University to revise their decision and help to sustain the work of the Centre for Men's Health!

June 22, 2017

Dr. Paco Abril Morales, Girona. Dr. Gary Barker, Washington DC. Mag.a Nadja Bergmann, Vienna. Dr. Marc Gärtner, Berlin & Graz. Professor Emeritus Jeff Hearn, Ph.D., Helsinki. Professor Dr. Philos. Øystein Gullvåg Holter, Oslo. Dr. Majda Hrzeniak, Ljubljana. Dr. Ralf Puchert, Berlin. Mag.a Elli Scambor, Graz. Dr. Christian Scambor, Graz. doc. PhDr. Iva Šmídová, Ph.D, Brno.

Contact: marc.gaertner@dissens.de