Key principles

The Women's Mental Health Network values the following principles as fundamental to its ethos, and holds a common understanding and agreement of these principles as the basis for participation:

- While women and men experience mental health difficulties to equal degrees, there are important differences as regards needs, experiences and causative factors. Awareness and responsiveness to these differences will improve effectiveness of services and health outcomes.
- Gender inequalities have a powerful impact on mental health and wellbeing. Issues related to women's mental health cannot be considered without acknowledging the relevance of the socio-economic and socio-cultural contexts within which women live.
- Gender-based violence and mental health difficulties are fundamentally linked, and mental health services have a key role to play in tackling and eliminating gender-based violence.
- The right to enjoy the highest attainable level of mental health is a human right. Everyone should have access to good mental health services as a basic right.
- Mental health policy, strategy, and services should be grounded in human rights, and developed in consultation with the people in need of or accessing mental health services.
- Collaboration and cooperation amongst different voices and sectors working in relation to women's mental health issues is positive and necessary to promote and enable positive change and progress.