

## Reports from the colleges

# World Mental Health Day

The 10 October is known the World over as World Mental Health Day – the result of a global advocacy and awareness program started by the World Federation for Mental Health in 1992. Proudly, this is one of the World Federation for Mental Health's most important and far-reaching programs.

The World Federation for Mental Health, founded in 1948 in London, has been engaged in advocacy and education to change perceptions of mental illness for 62 years. Each year the World Federation for Mental Health selects a theme for World Mental Health Day, produces public education material for the theme, and makes it available to organisations around the globe through website downloads and CD distribution. Last year we translated the material into eight languages in addition to English, and distributed thousands of CDs to organisations and individuals as close as the US and Canada and as far away as Bangladesh, Slovenia and Papua New Guinea.

Each year on 10 October, thousands of individuals and groups will gather to celebrate and promote the only global day for mental health awareness. This annual program was created as a way to bring more attention to mental illness and its effects on individual life, work, family and overall stability of communities and countries. This year our global theme is 'Mental Health and Long Term Illness: The Need for Continued and Integrated Care'. We will produce and distribute over 5000 awareness CDs around the World to advocate for better services and understanding for those who suffer not only with long term physical illnesses, but who also experience mental health issues as a result of diminished health.

We all agree that one of the most important aspects of a 'good life' is our overall health. A meaningful definition of health as a 'healthy state of well-being' should address the whole person, 'the general condition of the body and mind'. Studies show that physical and mental well-being have a major impact on one another – cancer, diabetes, chronic pain, cardiovascular or respiratory disease should not be viewed in isolation from the possible mental and emotional issues of an individual.

The most prominent long term illnesses are currently the leading cause of death and disability the world over; Dr Gauden Galea, UN/WHO Coordinator of Health Promotion, has noted that four chronic diseases – cardiovascular, diabetes, cancer and respiratory illness – are responsible for 60% of the world's deaths, 'and 80% of these deaths are

happening in the poorest populations of the world'. The management of many of these long term illnesses has attracted attention because of its impact on mortality, health resources, quality of life, and the economic burden to government, healthcare and families.

This year's theme for World Mental Health Day is a critical move forward in drawing attention to the effect of long term illness on patients with major chronic disease and their families, as well as its importance to mental health advocates. Addressing mental health issues will lead to better outcomes, better compliance, and improved quality of life for people who suffer from chronic illnesses. Campaign materials will focus on proven strategies for promoting emotional and mental well-being while living with long term physical illness, and the role of primary care in improving access for those who suffer from mental health and long term health conditions. A special call to action section has been written by seven international health professionals, intended to show us the way forward.

As an advocate of health and healthcare, we urge you to join our major sponsors – Eli Lilly and Company, Otsuka America Pharmaceutical, Inc. and many additional organisations by endorsing the 2010 World Mental Health Day Campaign – 'Mental Health and Long Term Illness: The Need for Continued and Integrated Care'. Help support the World Federation for Mental Health in its efforts to promote this day of international awareness by joining the list of endorsers and showing your commitment to improved global health for all. Your endorsement will create a stronger platform to bring much needed attention to the issues surrounding long term illness and mental health care. Having your support will allow us to increase the impact and global reach of this annual campaign.

Your endorsement, with your company name and logo, will be highlighted in all materials developed for World Mental Health Day, including the World Federation for Mental Health website and in advertising and promotional pieces.

We need your support. We need your endorsement. Please work with us on this important global program intended to raise awareness of the critical need for promoting emotional and mental well-being for those living with long-term chronic illnesses.

Contact: Deborah Maguire, WMHDAY Campaign Coordinator, at [dmaguire@wfmh.com](mailto:dmaguire@wfmh.com) or +703.494.6515, ext 204 to confirm your endorsement and we will promptly send you the WMHDAY 2010 proclamation to sign and return.

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# WPA Thematic Conference: Mental Health and Family Medicine Professionals: Working Together, 9–11 February 2012, Granada

Dear Friends and Colleagues

It is our pleasure and honour to invite you to our next thematic conference *Mental health and family medicine professionals working together*.

This conference will build on the themes developed in Granada in June 2008 during the WPA Thematic Conference, organised in close collaboration with Wonca-Europe, *Depression and relevant psychiatric conditions in Primary Care*.

Mental health service users worldwide deserve the best possible management and interventions to achieve the best possible outcomes. This second thematic conference will further strengthen the collaboration between primary and secondary care organisations working in the field of mental health for the benefit of those people affected by mental ill health, including their families and carers. The best possible outcomes can only be achieved through collaboration and working together.

This second thematic conference provides an opportunity to share ideas through presenting original scientific research, participation in workshops, through short presentations, posters and plenary sessions delivered by a variety of international and local experts in the field of mental health, including the voice of service users.

Some of you may already have experienced the hospitality of Andalusia. This is an area that has a strong background in mental health developments, and the Andalusian Group of Research on Mental Health (GAISAM) was created in 1987. The MARISTAN Network to promote cooperation in the Mental Health field between Europe and Latin America was developed in 1997 and in 2008 the group became part of CIBERSAM, a Spanish network of Biomedical Research Centres in Mental Health.

Granada has successfully hosted four previous international mental health conferences, and it gives us great pleasure to invite you to this WPA Wonca Thematic Conference which takes place in February 2012 in Granada, a city built under the shadow of the Alhambra, a magnificent legacy of the Arabic cultural heritage.

Further information available at: [www.thematicconferencegranada2012.com/](http://www.thematicconferencegranada2012.com/)

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