



FIRST ISSUE 2015

# WFMH BULLETIN

## WFMH CONGRESSES 2015

### LILLE, FRANCE

28-30 April 2015  
(International)

### BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA

26-28 August 2015  
(Regional)

### SINGAPORE

1-3 October 2015  
(Regional)

### CAIRO, EGYPT

16-19 October 2015  
(Biennial World Congress)

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for Mental Health  
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### BRIEF REVIEW OF WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY

### JIM BIRLEY SCHOLARSHIP

# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear WFMH Members and Friends,

As we start a new year it is customary to look back and review the events of the previous year, and then look forward to new efforts with optimism. The World Federation for Mental Health has enjoyed good progress in the past year and hopes this will continue in 2015.

Throughout 2014 we moved forward with the 14-point Action Plan I presented when I took office as President in August 2013. Twelve committees of Board members, former Board members and staff were formed to activate the Action Plan. These committees covered the following areas: Public Impact, World Mental Health Day, Education and Mental Health Information, Ethics, Meetings, Scientific Activities, Prevention and Promotion, Constituency Development, Financial Policy and Sustainability, By-laws, the Great Push for Mental Health Campaign, plus a Past President's Committee.

Great emphasis was placed on the revision of the By-laws, recognizing that the previous By-laws had serious defects. Changes aiming at more democratic functioning of the organization and greater involvement of our constituency were proposed.

I also placed a high priority on increasing the Federation's visibility, and had generous pro bono help from a Chicago strategy and marketing firm, c:change. A new logo was created and the WFMH website was redesigned ([www.wfmh.org](http://www.wfmh.org)).

Many of our activities focused on raising awareness for the 2014 World Mental Health Day theme, "Living with Schizophrenia." The goal was to increase public education about schizophrenia as a treatable illness, and about prospects for improvement and recovery for many people who experience it. More than half of the persons with the condition do not receive appropriate treatment.

The campaign material was prepared under the direction of our World Mental Health Day committee. A group of volunteer experts wrote the material which was posted on the website in August, and translations were arranged into Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, Japanese and Russian.

Many events were held around the world to mark the Day, and we particularly appreciated the letters of support from the Orthodox Patriarch Bartholomew and Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu, and the message issued by the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

The Federation launched its global observance of World Mental Health Day with an International Congress on the theme in Athens, Greece, that was attended by more than 400 participants from 30 countries. The three-day conference program included a special evening event at the Aula (main hall) of the University of Athens attended by Greece's Deputy Health Minister, many officials and local NGO representatives. At the close of the Congress a *Declaration of Athens* was issued, endorsed by eleven organizations, to set out key facts about the illness and treatment possibilities.

Among the many activities arranged on or close to World Mental Health Day I particularly want to note the conference at the EU Parliament in Brussels that focused on the role of caregivers in supporting people with schizophrenia. I had the opportunity to highlight our role and work to that end, and



Above: George N. Christodoulou

the Federation produced a supplementary package of material on its website that focused on many issues that caregivers encounter as they provide assistance.

In November I represented the Federation in the program of a Forum on Depression arranged by *The Economist* in London. This high-level conference drew attention to the impact of depression on working-age people, and the need for employers to address it.

Planning for activities in 2015 has already begun. The Federation has selected the theme for the next World Mental Health Day campaign, and proposes to have three conferences with international and local partners in 2015 to allow more opportunities to reach regional audiences. You will find information about these events in this Bulletin.

Thank you for your support last year. I will stay in touch about developments in 2015.

With best wishes,

George Christodoulou

**PRESIDENT,  
WORLD FEDERATION  
FOR MENTAL HEALTH**

## **WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY THEME FOR 2015**

The theme selected by the WFMH Board for World Mental Health Day (October 10) in 2015 is “*Mental Health and Dignity*.” An approach to mental illness that incorporates dignity is the reverse of an approach that was widespread for many years – an approach that was based on social stigma and discrimination, and failed to recognize mental disorders as illnesses that deserve the same care and attention as physical illnesses.

This year’s theme encompasses the contrast between dignity and stigma and the need for parity between physical and mental health care. The campaign will take a broad approach to the topic, considering many related issues such as person-centered care, diversity and social inclusion, and mental health promotion to improve awareness about mental disorders in settings such as schools, employment and elder care. The Federation will recruit an international panel of experts to write the chapters, and the material will be posted on the WFMH website in mid-2015.

# NOTES FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR CONSTITUENCY DEVELOPMENT

Dear Members of the WFMH,

My messages in this issue of your Bulletin are brief. The President's New Year Message looked backwards to the numerous achievements in 2014 and then looked forward to 2015 with optimism and hope. I too am hopeful about the outlook for 2015.

My second message is to refer you to my letter in the last issue of the Bulletin, consulting you about a few questions concerning the future of WFMH constituency development. I urge you to reply and express your views on these important issues.

Thirdly, I ask whether you and your organization would like to organize the next World Congress in 2017 (or perhaps in 2019). We have some candidates already (Singapore, London and Mexico) but it would be worth considering other suggestions.

Finally, and as Chair of the Scientific Committee of the forthcoming WFMH World Congress in Cairo, I ask for your proposals for topics under the agreed themes and for your contributions in the form of oral or poster presentations. Go to the Congress website ([www.wfmh2015.com](http://www.wfmh2015.com)) for information about registration and the submission of abstracts. Also, please see the article below.

Please send your comments on any or all of these questions to me at [mabousal@gmail.com](mailto:mabousal@gmail.com).

Regards,

Mohammed Abou Saleh



*Above: Mohammed Abou Saleh*

# WFMH CONFERENCES IN 2015



CAIRO, EGYPT, 16-19 OCTOBER 2015

WFMH's XX Biennial World Congress

*"Mental Health in Times of Crisis: Building a Comprehensive Health Care System"*

The Federation's 2015 World Congress is organized by WFMH; The Royal College of Psychiatrists – Middle East Division; The Behman Hospital, Egypt; and the Egyptian Society for the Rights of People with Mental Illness. The World Association for Psychosocial Rehabilitation (WAPR) has agreed to co-sponsor the conference and will be contributing to its activities.

The steering committee has met regularly since September, and was joined by Professor Abdel Malak from Australia for several planning sessions. The website was launched in November ([www.wfmh2015.com](http://www.wfmh2015.com)). The Scientific Committee headed by Professor Mohammed Abu Saleh and Professor Fakhr El Islam has started receiving scientific papers and requests for symposia. *The website contains guidelines for the submission of abstracts; the deadline is 1 June 2015.*



*Above: Nasser Loza*

The program will focus on improving mental health care through clinical innovation, research and policy, providing a supportive environment, treating co-morbidity, and refugee mental health. Attention will be paid to the rights of people with mental illness; to models of excellence in the prevention of mental disorders and mental health promotion; and to arts-based interventions (art, music, dance). Alternative medicine and non-traditional health practices are also included.

Three main keynote speakers have been confirmed—Mrs. Jehane Al Sadat, Dr. Ismaeil Sirag El-Din, Head of the Alexandria Bibliotheca, and Dr. Zahi Hawass, the well-known archeologist and Egyptologist.

The following are among the proposed plenary sessions:

- ICD-11: Update on its status (Shekhar Saxena and Khalid Saeed, WHO)
- Stigma in mental health (Fakhr el Islam, Egypt)
- Neuroleptics in psychiatry: Perspectives of doctors, consumers and policy-makers (A. Sheshaie, Egypt)
- Female genital mutilation and mental health (Said Abdel Azim, Egypt)
- Mental health in war zones (Eli Karam, Lebanon, and Mohamed Abou Saleh, UK)
- Mental health of refugees (Nancy Baron, Egypt)

Other proposals include two debates in the format of the popular session at the WFMH Athens Congress in 2014, and a workshop on art therapy.

The initial announcement has been sent out by email to some 4,000 addresses locally, regionally and internationally, and posters have been distributed at various meetings in the region.

Information about registration fees is available on the website. These are set out in four tiers according to World Bank categories. Fees range from US\$450 to US\$290 for Early Bird registration before July 2015, and move up to a range of US\$590-US\$330 after the start of July. There is provision for one-day registration, and lower fees are provided for consumers, carers and students.

Social events for the meeting have already been booked. They include an opening reception at the Convention Center hosted by the Minister of Tourism; an evening at the Pyramids in Giza for a lecture and the Sound and Light historical show; an evening at the Cairo Opera House; and a reception at our home. The Congress will be held at the InterContinental Citystars Hotel, which has excellent conference facilities.

Follow event planning on our Facebook and Twitter pages where we will post updates:

<https://www.facebook.com/wfmh2015>

<https://twitter.com/WFMH2015>

We are looking forward to receiving more scientific material and interest from the international scene in the coming months.

Nasser Loza  
Director  
The Behman Hospital  
Helwan, Cairo



LILLE, FRANCE, 28-30 APRIL 2015

International Congress

*“Mental Health for All -*

*-Connecting People and Sharing Experience”*

#### ***A Letter from the Joint Chair of the Conference***

I would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year.

2014 was eventful, full of excitement and opportunities. I very much hope we can continue in the same spirit in 2015, taking advantage of every chance to advance global mental health advocacy.

Many of you have either submitted abstracts or confirmed your attendance at the conference in Lille, France, on 28-30 April 2015. This international meeting will provide us with an opportunity to share good practice in advocating for mental health. We are very pleased to have received such a large number and range of high quality abstracts from across the globe.

We have confirmed a line-up of excellent plenary speakers including George Christodoulou, Shekhar Saxena, Jean-Luc Roelandt, Renaud Jadri, Jean Oureib, David Goldberg, Job F.M. Metsemakers, Mike Pringle, Michael Hübel, Dinesh Bhugra, Tine Van Bortel, David Crepaz-Keay, Antony Dowell, Antoine Lazarus, Unaiza Niaz, Jeffrey Geller, Ulrich Hegerl, Pierre Thomas, Patt Franciosi and Gabriel Ivbijaro.

If you go to the “daily planner” for the conference you will get an idea of the international dimensions of the program:

<http://www.imhclille2015.com/docs/dailyPlanner.pdf>

Information about registration is available on the conference website at [www.imhclille2015.com](http://www.imhclille2015.com). The Congress has applied for EACCME accreditation.



***Above: Gabriel Ivbijaro***

On Thursday 30th April 2015 we will launch the “Lille Declaration for Mental Health” so, if the date is not already in your diary, please plan to come. I look forward to welcoming you to Lille, one of Europe’s beautiful, historic cities.

With best wishes,

Gabriel Ivbijaro MBE  
President Elect, WFMH

WFMH is joined in presenting the Congress in Lille by its French Psychiatrist partners—Congrès de Psychiatrie et de Neurologie de Langue Française (CPNLF); Société de l’Information Psychiatrique (SIP); Association Française de Psychiatrie Biologique et de Neuropharmacologie (AFPBN); Société Française de Psychiatrie de l’Enfant et de l’Adolescent et des Disciplines Associées (SFPEADA); Regional Federation of Research in Mental Health, Nord-Pas-de-Calais; Institut de Psychiatrie/GDR3557; Association des Equipes Mobiles en Psychiatrie (AEMP); Eceve Inserm UMRS 1123; and EPSM Lille-Métropole. WONCA, the World Association of Family Doctors, is a co-sponsor.

The language of the Congress is English, with some workshop sections in French and simultaneous translation for the plenaries.

For the program and registration, go to [www.imhclille2015.com](http://www.imhclille2015.com)

## BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA, 26-28 August 2015

### Regional Congress

*“Lecturas de la memoria. Ciencia, clínica y política”*

*(Lessons on memory. Scientific, clinical and political.)*

WFMH will hold its second Regional Congress in Argentina in collaboration with the IX Argentine Congress of Mental Health, under the auspices of the AASM (Argentine Association of Mental Health). The President of the AASM Congress is Juan Carlos Fantin and the Vice-President is Eduardo Grande; the President of the WFMH Congress is Alberto Trimboli. The dual meeting will take place in the Panamericano Hotel & Resort and the Colón Hotel in the heart of Buenos Aires. The website is [www.congreso2015.aasm.org.ar](http://www.congreso2015.aasm.org.ar), and the deadline for the submission of abstracts is 24 April 2015.

To reach the local secretariat, contact:

AASM  
Ayacucho 234  
Buenos Aires, Argentina  
Tel/Fax 54 11 4952 1923  
Email: [congreso@aasm.org.ar](mailto:congreso@aasm.org.ar)



*Above: Alberto Trimboli*



SINGAPORE, 1-3 OCTOBER 2015

Regional Congress

*“Innovations in Mental Health Care through Holistic Interventions in the Asia Pacific Region”*

WFMH will hold an Asian Regional Congress in Singapore on 1-3 October 2015, co-hosted by Raffles College of Higher Education and Silver Ribbon Singapore ([www.wfmhsingapore2015.com](http://www.wfmhsingapore2015.com)). The program will be designed specifically for an Asian audience. The meeting will be held at the Fairmont Hotel.

The Congress planners have assembled a large group of local agencies and organizations to support the conference. They include the Agency for Integrated Care, the Association for Psychiatric Rehabilitation (Singapore), The Asian Woman’s Welfare Association Center for Caregivers, the Caregivers Alliance, the Health Promotion Board, the Institute of Mental Health, the National Council of Social Service, National University Hospital, Singapore Anglican Community Services, the Sage Counseling Centre, the Singapore Association for Mental Health, the Singapore Exhibition and Convention Bureau, and the Singapore Psychiatric Association.

The Early Bird rate is available until 7 July (Singapore\$ 550; Singapore\$ 200 for students). The program includes sessions on the challenges for WFMH; mental health promotion in Hong Kong; the role of primary care in treating comorbid mental and physical health conditions; person-centered integrated care through innovative service design; and global action on addictions.

Silver Ribbon (Singapore) is a non-profit organization launched by Singapore’s former President Nathan in 2006 to combat mental health stigma and encourage early treatment. It is very active in community education. The founding Executive Director is Porsche Poh, a WFMH Board member and co-chair of the Congress.

Raffles College of Higher Education in Singapore has an international faculty and is part of a network of colleges in major cities in Australia, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Philippines and Saudi Arabia. Dr. Monica Walet, the Academic Director of Raffles College and Program Director of Postgraduate Studies and Psychology, is co-chair of the Congress.

For information, contact [info@wfmhsingapore2015.com](mailto:info@wfmhsingapore2015.com) or call 65 6411 6690. You can join the mailing list from the website [www.wfmhsingapore2015.com](http://www.wfmhsingapore2015.com).

Porsche Poh  
Executive Director  
Silver Ribbon (Singapore)



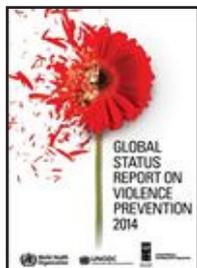
Above: Porsche Poh



Above: Monica Walet

# NEW REPORT FROM THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

## Global Status Report on Violence Prevention



The new *Global Status Report on Violence Prevention 2014* issued in December puts a spotlight on interpersonal violence—that is, violence between family members or intimate partners, friends, acquaintances and strangers. It does not cover self-directed violence and collective violence. A major focus is on violence against women and girls and maltreatment of children.

The opening of the report states that: “Since 2000, about 6 million people globally have been killed in acts of interpersonal violence, making homicide a more frequent cause of death than all wars combined during this period. Non-fatal interpersonal violence is more common than homicide and has serious and lifelong health and social consequences.”

Jointly published by the World Health Organization, the United Nations Development Program and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the report aggregates data from 133 countries covering 6.1 billion people, and aims to highlight the scale of the problem represented by interpersonal violence. The statistics for interpersonal violence experienced by women who have ever had partners are startlingly high (about one in three women overall; as high as 37% in some regions). Rates of childhood abuse are also extremely high.

The report is the first of its kind to assess national efforts to address interpersonal violence such as child maltreatment, youth violence, intimate partner and sexual violence, and elder abuse. It reviews the current status of violence prevention efforts and calls for a scaling up of these programs; stronger legislation and enforcement of laws relevant to violence prevention; and enhanced services for victims.

The *Global status report on violence prevention 2014* is available in English from the WHO website ([www.who.int](http://www.who.int)). Chapters are also posted individually, and cover data collection, estimating global homicide deaths, country profiles, types of violence, child maltreatment, youth violence, intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and elder abuse. Executive Summaries in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish are available on the website.

# UN COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

The 59th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women will take place at UN Headquarters in New York on 9-20 March 2015. This government-level meeting will provide the 20-year review of the UN Conference on Women and the Beijing Platform for Action (1995).

The official meeting has a large program of parallel events arranged by accredited NGOs. WFMH will present a panel on Wednesday, 11 March, at 10.30 a.m. in the Church Center's Hardin Room. It is being organized by the Federation's Main UN Representative, Nancy Wallace, on the topic "Women's Mental Health and the Global Sustainable Development Agenda." Dr. Juan Mezzich, WFMH Vice President for Government Affairs, will give the welcome address.

The panel will propose that women's mental health is a key to achieving the targets currently being negotiated for the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) framework. Discussion will focus on supporting a global campaign to get mental health included in the new SDGs. If you are interested in attending the panel session, contact Nancy Wallace for information ([newallace@earthlink.net](mailto:newallace@earthlink.net)).

The UN's Millennium Development Goals project ends in 2015, and will be replaced by Sustainable Development Goals currently under negotiation. To sign on to show support for the inclusion of mental health in the SDGs, please visit the website [www.fundamentalsdg.org](http://www.fundamentalsdg.org) to read about the #FundaMentalSDG initiative.

# NEWS FROM WFMH VOTING ORGANIZATIONS



## Egyptian Society for the Rights of People with Mental Illness

The Society was founded in November 2010 following the ratification of the Mental Health Act 2009 that replaced the old and outdated Act of 1944. The purpose of the Society is to support the positive changes brought in by the law and to increase awareness by patients of the new law's spirit in advocating for the rights of people with mental illness to be treated with dignity.

The emphasis in the new Act is on allowing patients with mental illness more access to express their views and challenge restrictive orders, and to increase the constraints on professionals in the use of holding powers.

The development of the Society slowed during the political unrest following the revolution in Egypt in early 2011, but it is now resuming its activities and reorganizing its membership, focusing on reaching out to people with mental illness in psychiatric institutions and in the community to increase awareness of their rights and of ways in which the Society can help and support them.

A newly reconstituted steering committee of the Society will meet early in 2015 to make plans for the coming months, and it is expected that the Society will play an active role in the proceedings of the WFMH Congress in Cairo in October 2015.



## Vox Pro Salud Mental, Mexico (Voice for Mental Health)

Vox Pro Salud Mental is a network of nongovernmental organizations active in 12 states in Mexico. Its primary task is to provide psychoeducation to families and consumers. Using "Family to Family" (a NAMI program) we have helped more than 5,000 families. In addition some of the organizations offer the "Peer to Peer" program (also from NAMI), and some use "Land Ahoy," a Mexican program for consumers. We also have support groups.

Last year our organization participated as part of Coalicion Mexico (COAMEX) in the civil society program at the UN connected with the 7th Session of the *Conference of States Parties on the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (10-12 June 2014). One of our representatives, Paola, a consumer, spoke about her experiences, including a suicide attempt and being hospitalized against her will. She was persuasive in putting forward the view that medication is valuable if a person wishes to have it.

We celebrate World Mental Health Day each year in different states and in Mexico City at the National

Psychiatric Institute Ramon de la Fuente. We also have a conference program in which family members and consumers take part. Last year we participated in the WFMH Congress in Athens, Greece. We are continuously engaged in anti-stigma campaigning in schools, universities and in the media.

In October we were invited to take part in the WHO-PAHO regional launch of WHO's Report "Preventing suicide: a global imperative" at the National Institute of Psychiatry Ramon de la Fuente, along with colleagues from other Central and South American countries.

One of our leading affiliates, the NGO Ingenium ABP from Monterrey in Nuevo Leon State (north-east Mexico), will be hosting a WFMH Regional Congress in 2016. We would love to have you attend, we'd love to work together with you for mental health, and we'd love to show you our part of our country

A planning team from Monterrey attended the WFMH Board Meeting in Athens on 12 October 2014 to present the proposal for this Regional Congress. The Mexican planning team included myself; Ana María Solbes Marín, Executive Director of Ingenium: Educacion en Salud Mental; and Federico Treviño, Director General of the Monterrey Mexico Convention and Visitors Bureau.

The WFMH Board approved the proposal; the exact date in 2016 has still to be finalized. The theme will be "Mental Health: A Holistic Approach." The main language of the meeting will be English, with translation for plenary presentations. The proposed venue is the Cintermex Convention Center in the Fundidora Park Complex. The organizers expect to draw attendance from the USA as well as from Latin America.

Gabriela Camara  
Executive Director  
Vox Pro Salud Mental  
[prosaludmentaldf@yahoo.com.mx](mailto:prosaludmentaldf@yahoo.com.mx)



## Psychiatric Association for Eastern Europe and the Balkans (PAEEB)

The Association is comprised of the Psychiatric Associations of the countries in the Eastern Europe and the Balkans area and it is an evolution of the Institutional Program on Eastern Europe and the Balkans that was established by the World Psychiatric Association.

The aim of the Association is to advance Psychiatry and Mental Health in general in the respective areas of Europe. For this purpose the Association has organized three congresses on Mental Health in Eastern Europe, in Thessaloniki (Greece), Moscow (Russia) and Belgrade (Serbia), with great success.

The PAEEB produced the Thessaloniki Declaration on 20th September 2007 in support of the need to promote scientific knowledge in Eastern Europe and has also co-signed the Athens Declaration on Disasters (2013) and on "Living with Schizophrenia" (2014).



*Above: The officers of the Association*

The governance of the Association at present is as follows:

- Honorary Presidents: George Christodoulou (Greece) and Dusica Lecic-Tosevski (Serbia)
- President: Valery Krasnov (Russia)
- General Secretary: Nikos Christodoulou (Greece)
- Treasurer: Olga Karpenko (Russia)
- Website: [www.paeeb.com](http://www.paeeb.com)

The Association has co-sponsored a number of congresses worldwide and has contributed to the development of psychiatric policies in the countries of Eastern Europe, especially in Georgia where its assistance has been requested by the local Psychiatric Association.

The next congress of the Association will be held in Athens, Greece on 12 to 15 November 2015.

Information: Convin PCO, e-mail: [aalexandrou@pco-convin.gr](mailto:aalexandrou@pco-convin.gr)



## Enosh, the Israel Mental Health Association

### *Mind and Fitness – Encouraging a Healthy Lifestyle among People with Psychiatric Disabilities*

Quite often, physical and mental health disorders go hand in hand. Low activity level, sedentary lifestyle and progressive weight gain contribute significantly to developing metabolic syndrome which corresponds to a high incidence of cardiovascular disease – the main cause of death among mental health patients. Evidence also suggests that the side effects of mental health medication (first and second generation drugs) are also associated primarily with metabolic syndrome.

Mental health patients live 25-30 years less than the general population. Excess weight, smoking and diabetes are 1.5 – 3.0 times higher among schizophrenia patients compared to the general public. There is a strong need for integration between mental health and physical care to reduce the burden of illness while minimizing distressing side effects, leading to substantial improvement in patients' life quality and longevity.

Last year Enosh launched a comprehensive Mind and Body Program for individuals aged 18-65 with a psychiatric disability (depression, post traumatic stress disorder, schizophrenia, personality disorders) who live in the community and are not necessarily in treatment for rehabilitation. The program operates within a Social Sports Club framework, the first of its kind in Israel to combine physical activity, health and nutrition workshops, and spiritual exercises such as Yoga and Tai Chi. The project offers exercise classes, smoking cessation workshops, and social events. Some classes take place in the Daniel Rowing Center in Tel Aviv, allowing for encounters with the community that contribute to the reduction of stigma. Suitable participants are incorporated as instructors and lecturers, providing them with new employment opportunities.



*Above: Mind and Fitness—Rowing a Dragon Boat*

The motivating idea of the program is based on humanistic psychology, which views patients as a totality of body, mind and spirit, credits environmental influences, and considers participants as active beings able to make choices. It stresses the importance of growth and self-actualization as a means to achieve better general mental health and wellness. The goal is to improve self-esteem, body image, quality of sleep and cognitive functioning. The comprehensive approach aims at allowing people with psychiatric disabilities to enrich their lives, engage in new and creative experiences, and integrate in all spheres of life.

Bosmat Admon  
Enosh Spokesman  
[Bosmat\\_admon@enosh.org.il](mailto:Bosmat_admon@enosh.org.il)

## Syrian Association for Mental Health

The Syrian Association for Mental Health (SAMH) will hold its third conference on the psychological and social sequelae of the Syrian crisis. The venue is Gaziantep, Turkey, the languages are Arabic and English, and the dates are 24-25 April 2014.

For information about late abstract submission please contact Mr. Anas Alshabaani at [syriasamh@gmail.com](mailto:syriasamh@gmail.com) or Dr. Mamoun Mobayed at [mobayed@hotmail.com](mailto:mobayed@hotmail.com).

# A BRIEF REVIEW OF WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY 2014

WFMH noted with appreciation messages published in individual countries from politicians and government departments about the Day and its theme, "Living with Schizophrenia." Some WHO regional offices organized events. Media reporting was widespread. Social media mentions and exchanges were also very numerous. In countries where information about mental illness is lacking all of these initiatives were particularly valuable.

**Online.** For a quick review, please Google "*Images for World Mental Health Day 2014*" to find an extensive online display of the lively posters created by organizations around the globe to publicize their events. Some organizations focused on the WFMH theme, and others used the Day to publicize mental health promotion generally. Overall, it's an impressive display of efforts to raise awareness about matters that people often find hard to discuss.

Events in Greece have been described earlier in this Bulletin, and also the messages from the Ecumenical Patriarch of the Orthodox Church, Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu and the UN Secretary-General, and the meeting held in the EU Parliament. Below are brief summaries about some local events that took forward the mission of public education about schizophrenia and about mental disorders generally. They are typical of the variety of events that celebrated the Day.

**Argentina.** There were five major events organized by different institutions to recognize World Mental Health Day, as well as local activities. The five events were organized by:

- The Department of Mental Health of the School of Medicine at the University of Buenos Aires, along with Fundacion Humanas and Fundacion Contener

- The Argentine Association for Mental Health
- The Argentine Association of Psychiatry, in conjunction with Fundacion Contener
- The School of Medicine at the University of Cordoba, in conjunction with Fundacion Contener
- The Metropolitan Association of Psychiatry.

**India.** In Madurai the M.S. Chellamuthu Trust and Research Foundation, MANASA (the District Welfare Agency for Mentally Disabled People), and SUBITCHAM (the Family Fellowship for People with Mental Retardation and Mental Illness), arranged a seminar on schizophrenia along with various other non-governmental mental health organizations. A street play on the identification of mental illness was presented by a cultural team from the Pudhu Vazhvu Mental Health Programme in Theni District.

**India.** Rajasthan mental health awareness programs were taken to rural and suburban areas of Sikar, Churu and Jaipur, with students carrying banners through the area and chanting slogans. The project was organized by the Dr. V.D.Meel Health, Welfare and Awareness Trust.

**India.** In Mumbai The Thought Co. held its second Mental Health Awareness Weekend designed to clear misconceptions and create positive attitudes about mental health. The free program was held at a spacious walking promenade and drew 500 people for information sessions about recognizing disorders and seeking help. The program also included videos, songs, performances and discussions.

**Georgia.** Federation Global Initiative on Psychiatry held an information event on schizophrenia at the National Library in Tbilisi where FGIP Chief Executive Robert Van Voren discussed progress in treating the illness, the effects of stigma, and the need to speak out about mental illness.

**Europe.** EUFAMI released the results of a survey on the challenges faced by caregivers supporting those who have a mental illness. EUFAMI also produced a special World Mental Health Day edition of its Bulletin with descriptions of events in *Cyprus* (Advocacy Group for the Mentally Ill – AGMI); *Spain* (FEAFES Confederation); *Wales* (Hafal); *Greece* (Kinapsi); *Norway* (LLP Landsforeningen for Pårørende innen Psykist Helse); *Malta* (Mental Health Association); *Russia* (New Choices); *England* (Rethink Mental Illness); and *Ireland* (Shine).

**Namibia.** The University of Namibia School of Nursing and Public Health (Mental Health Unit) held a community information session about living with schizophrenia. Dr. Ndapeua Nehale Shifiona gave a presentation. Banners, posters and leaflets written in the vernacular language and English were used. On 10 and 17 October staff from the Mental Health Unit stood at the entrance gate to the Oshakati Health Centre, engaging members of the public and health care workers in conversation about what more needs to be done to improve mental health care for people with schizophrenia.

**Nigeria.** In Owo, Ondo State (South West Nigeria), an awareness walk to mark World Mental Health Day was held at the Federal Medical Centre.

**Pakistan.** World Mental Health Day was observed in Karachi with a Mental Health Forum convened by BasicNeeds Pakistan and MASHAL, Aman Foundation. About 600 people attended. The Forum launched an alliance of 21 mental health organizations working in Karachi who plan to share resources and work cooperatively to increase their impact in advocating for awareness, improved treatment and social integration of people with mental illness. The program offered presentations on issues surrounding schizophrenia, stigma and discrimination associated with mental illness, and the implementation of the Sindh Mental Health Act 2013.

Also in Karachi, the Jinnah Medical and Dental College organized a program on “Living with Schizophrenia” and the Sindh Mental Health Act 2013.

**Portugal.** ENCONTRAR-SE (Association for the Promotion of Mental Health) and the Centre for Studies in Human Development at the Faculty of Education and Psychology in the Catholic University of Portugal produced a one-day conference on the theme of “Living with Schizophrenia.” A day later ENCONTRAR-SE launched its 8th edition of Rosalynn Carter’s book “Within our Reach: Ending the Mental Health Crisis.” The organization also launched an award to honor people who have played a leading role in the fight against stigma and discrimination. The first people to receive it were Mrs. Carter; Kjell Magne Bondevik, the former Prime Minister of Norway who publicly announced an episode of mental illness while in office; and Zé Pedro Reis, a Portuguese musician who played a key role in founding the “United to Help” movement. The award ceremony took place at a charity dinner attended by more than 200 people.

**Singapore.** Silver Ribbon (Singapore) organized events at three different locations on World Mental Health day. Over 3,000 people attended the programs at Hougang, Gaylang Serai and Woodlands that combined educational booths and talks with games, yoga, music therapy and other activities. Four members of Parliament participated in the programs, as well as many grassroots leaders.

**Tanzania.** The Dar es Salaam Voluntary Association placed large banners with mental health messages along the side of busy roads, and BBC Kiswahili did a story about the Voluntary Association’s World Mental Health Day activities for children.



*Above:  
Participants at one of the events in  
Singapore*



*Left:  
A roadside banner in Dar es Salaam*

## JIM BIRLEY SCHOLARSHIP

A scholarship has been established by the Federation Global Initiative on Psychiatry to honor its late Past Chairman, Jim Birley (1928-2013), a distinguished British psychiatrist, teacher and advocate for comprehensive services in mental health care. He was especially committed to issues of human rights in mental health. The Jim Birley Scholarship will be awarded once a year to a young mental health professional or another stakeholder (user, family-member or carer) who has shown exemplary commitment to the issue of human rights in mental health.

In 2015 one scholarship of 5,000 euros will be awarded. It is to be used for a cause proposed by the winner that contributes to the strengthening of human rights in the field of mental health. To apply, candidates should send a letter to explain why they should be eligible, with information about their background and what they have done to further human rights in mental health. Two letters of recommendation should be added.

The application should be sent to the following address, to arrive by 31 March:  
Human Rights in Mental Health-FGIP  
P.O. Box 1956  
1200 BZ Hilversum  
The Netherlands