

Document Title: **Bernardo Ng, MD, of WPA Medical Students Working Group to present at 2021 World Congress of Psychiatry**

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The 2021 World Congress of Psychiatry, convening Oct. 18-21, will feature a presentation on primary care from Bernardo Ng, MD, DFAPA, of the WPA Medical Students Working Group.

Dr. Ng, a clinical assistant professor at the University of California-San Diego, will co-present on capacity-building at the primary care level along with Marley Doyle, MD, and Melissa O'Dell, MD, both of the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC). The session will cover efforts across Mexico and the United States.

"In Mexico, as in many other countries of the world, the undersupply of psychiatrists calls for innovative strategies to broaden the availability of clinicians, including non-psychiatric physicians who are competent in the detection, diagnosis and treatment of the most prevalent mental disorders," Dr. Ng said.

In response to this need, the Mexican Psychiatric Association developed curricula to train primary care physicians in the subjects of depression, anxiety and suicide. An initial launch was planned for February 2020 but was delayed because of the COVID-19 pandemic. In spite of having to move from in-person to virtual training, Dr. Ng said, 1,600 physicians were trained by the end of the year. This capacity-building program is ongoing, with the intention to double the number of trained physicians by the end of 2021.

In his presentation, Dr. Ng will share lessons learned, opportunities for improvement and progress achieved by the Mexican Psychiatric Association's curricula.

In the U.S., there is a longstanding and worsening problem of access to mental health care, felt most acutely in rural areas. The Behavioral Health Education Center of Nebraska (BHECN) is an organization in the largely rural state of Nebraska that employs a variety of strategies to address the shortage of dedicated behavioral health providers, typically aimed at recruiting and retaining young people to careers in behavioral health.

Drs. Doyle and O'Dell will present BHECN's "Mental Health in Primary Care" curriculum, a free, interactive online curriculum developed in partnership with UNMC that will be made available to primary care providers throughout the state of Nebraska on an e-learning platform already used by many of the clinics for compliance training.

"Increasing the competence and confidence of primary care providers in diagnosing and treating mental health conditions is of the utmost importance in mental health professional shortage areas like rural Nebraska," Dr. O'Dell said.

The curriculum will be a comprehensive review of the diagnosis and treatment of mental illness, with an emphasis on practical tips for managing common behavioral health conditions in a primary care setting.

Learn more about the 2021 World Congress of Psychiatry [here](#).