

Document Title: **PROMOTING PSYCHIATRY AMONG MEDICAL STUDENTS:
WPA INITIATIVE**

Document Type: Summary paper

Author: WPA Working Group on Medical Students

Date Created: May 2021



Session Held at WPA Regional Virtual Conference Saint Petersburg, Russia May 16-18, 2021

Capacity Building initiative is an integral part of WPA Action Plan 2020-2023. In this regard Working Group on Medical Students was created to promote psychiatry among undergraduate students. This working group is involved in number of initiatives around the world.

Recently WPA Regional Conference Saint Petersburg, Russia was held virtually from May 16-18, 2021. The conference was titled “Interdisciplinary Understanding of Co-Morbidity in Psychiatry: From Science to Integrated Care”. This conference was very well attended locally and internationally.

An important session titled “Promoting Psychiatry among Medical Students: WPA Initiative” was held at this conference on 17th May. The session was chaired by Professor Muhammad Waqar Azeem (Chair of WPA Working Group on Medical Students). There were three presentations at this session. First presentation was titled “All-Russian Mental Health Educational Program for University Students”. This presentation was done by Dr. Natalia Treushnikova (Founder & President of the Union for Mental Health of Russia) and Dr. Olga Pazyna (Vice President of the Union for Mental Health of Russia). The speaker presented the innovative All-Russian Mental Health Educational Program for University Students that is aimed at raising awareness on mental health among medical and non-medical students at the Russian universities via presentation of modern approaches to prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation of mental and behavioral health disorders. The Union for Mental Health has signed cooperation agreements with 65 universities in Russia to promote this program. Since the beginning of 2021, more than 7000 medical and non-medical Russian students have increased awareness on mental health. The second presentation was done by Professor Petr Morozov (Secretary General of WPA) on “New approaches to attract undergraduates to Psychiatry”. Professor Morozov presented the situation about the psychiatrists availability in different parts of the world. He explained different initiatives taken under his leadership to promote psychiatry in Russia and globally. He shared comprehensive recommendations to promote psychiatry among medical students. It was also shared that Journal of “World Psychiatry” is translated in to Russian language for last 10 years and involved and motivated number of young psychiatrists during this process. Last presentation was titled “Mental Health and medical students in Pakistan” and was delivered by Professor Imran Ijaz Haider (Professor & Chair, Academic Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences, Fatima Memorial Hospital, Lahore). He presented the situation of mental health services in Pakistan. To promote psychiatry among medical students in Pakistan, one day event was held in February 2020 in Lahore Pakistan. More than 120 medical students participated. Speakers were invited locally and internationally. Pre and Post survey showed positive results regarding interest in psychiatry among medical students. More events like this are planned in the future.

Professor Afzal Javed (President of WPA) graced the occasion and shared his thoughts at the end. He emphasized the importance of promoting psychiatry among medical students and praised all the speakers and efforts of WPA Working Group on Medical Students. Professor Azeem concluded the session after some very interesting questions/answers. He thanked all the worthy speakers and honorable President of WPA.

Speakers during the Session

