



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

August 2020

Colleagues,

2020 has been a challenging year. Globally, we have all felt the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. At a local level, many countries have also had to contend with additional crises – fires, floods, earthquakes, mass displacements, political and social unrest, and more.

Tragically, just over a week ago, our friends and colleagues in Beirut experienced new and heartbreaking loss in all corners of their community following a large explosion that devastated many of the city's most populated areas. This tragedy comes at a time when the country is already battling the pandemic, economic crisis and other major problems. There is little doubt that the mental health impacts will be great.

At WPA, we extend our heartfelt sympathy to the Lebanese Psychiatric Association (LPA) and to all in Lebanon, standing ready to support our colleagues and their communities in any way we can. Colleagues in Lebanon have a strong record of coordinated and expert work in dealing with grave adversities. At this time, the WPA's emergency response executive and the Advisory Committee for Responses to Emergencies (ACRE), are working with them to understand how we can best be of practical help.

Establishing ACRE over the last few month positions WPA to respond rapidly, and as effectively as possible, to such a new challenge. At the same time, we are aware that coping with the pandemic remains a preoccupying and distressing reality for many colleagues across the world. ACRE continues to focus on responding to this – whether it be with advice, tools, counsel, connections or even funding for priority projects. Our website remains a key portal for information in this regard and, for this reason, I include here links to our [COVID-19 resources library](#), [news stories](#) and our [meetings pages](#) detailing the new dates or formats of forthcoming meetings.

Our solidarity as an association of psychiatrists is a precious attribute that we continue to nurture and use in times of crisis.

We hope soon for better times.

Best wishes
Helen

Prof. Helen Herrman AO
WPA President