

Report of the President

WPA's work over the last three years has been guided by our strategy to expand psychiatry's contribution to improving mental health for people across the globe. We have emphasized working with women and men living in adversity, as well as those with long-standing mental illnesses and psychosocial disabilities and their caregivers. We have also worked to highlight the role of psychiatry as a discipline central to medicine and health care and vital to sustainable development in each country. The health and societal emergency we all now face draws on these perspectives. I will return to WPA's response to the pandemic later in the report, calling as it does on the work and changes made in this triennium, as well as WPA's continuing strengths.

During the triennium, the WPA has worked closely with people with lived experience and their families, has built gender and geographic diversity in its leadership and scientific face, and engaged with international organizations and policy-makers. The Action Plan has provided a clear strategic intent that is framed by and builds on three characteristics. The first characteristic is WPA's contribution to the representation, reputation, development and knowledge of the profession. This has been achieved through several initiatives.

- The Service User and Family Carer Advisory Group coordinated by Prof Michaela Amering was established and has worked with enthusiastic participation of its members. It has met regularly and contributed to WPA's responses to emergency and to several challenging and important projects during the triennium, including congress planning and participation and the program on supporting alternatives to coercion in mental health care (see below).
- WPA has moved successfully – in scientific, social and financial terms – to the annual convening of the World Congress of Psychiatry, supported by our professional congress organiser Kenes International. The congresses have featured diversity by region, gender, age and experience. We have partnered with a range of organizations including the World Medical Association (WMA), the International Association of Women's Mental Health, the International Federation for Psychotherapy and many others.

The programs have been more inclusive than ever with expanded opportunities for people with lived experience and their families and from other sectors to be involved.

- Our revamped website and program of regular communications have kept Member Societies, WPA leadership and all those interested in WPA connected and informed. New processes allow Member Societies and all WPA components including the Scientific Sections to communicate more easily, keep information up-to-date, make requests and payments, and publish news and information.
- The new Standing Committee on Science, Education and Publications chaired by Professor Norman Sartorius has made a major contribution to the integration of WPA's scientific work and its presentation at the WPA Congresses.
- The Standing Committee on Ethics and Review chaired by Professor Sam Tyano revised the proposed WPA Code of Ethics. A Task Force convened by Prof Paul Appelbaum, co-chair of the Standing Committee, reviewed and revised the WPA recommendations for relationships of psychiatrists and others with the pharmaceutical industry. The Standing Committee has guided WPA in working with Member Societies to support the rights and needs of people with lived experience of mental ill health and of psychiatrists as well as physicians in several countries.
- The WPA has continued its collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse, including consultation on the WHO Commission on Non-Communicable Diseases, the WHO/United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) initiative on Helping Adolescents Thrive, and the EQUIP workforce development in psychological interventions. WPA consulted on development of the WHO report on "Enhancing mental health pre-service training with the mhGAP Intervention Guide: experiences and lessons learned."
- WPA responded to urgent requests from our two Member Societies in Ukraine for help and advice with a crisis in mental health care. The crisis arose in early 2020 from a significant loss of funding in the sector together with the impact of the pandemic. A WPA expert group chaired by Prof Eka Chkonia was established in collaboration with the international foundation Federation Global Initiatives in Psychiatry (Mental Health in Human Rights – FGIP). The expert

group worked rapidly with colleagues in Ukraine to produce a report that was sent through them to the Ministry of Health in Ukraine. The Member Societies are using the recommendations to contribute to national decisions on the resourcing and reform of services for people living with severe mental illnesses and disabilities.

- WPA has worked jointly with the WMA to respond to a report from the UN Special Rapporteur on Health to the UN Human Rights Council, to support the work of psychiatry and the quality of care needed by people living with mental disorders especially in low-income settings. Both WPA and WMA wish to collaborate on mutual interests in the future to build on this experience.
- WPA has initiated contacts with international organisations of journalists to develop cooperative approaches to improving how mental health and psychiatry are represented in the world's media.

The second characteristic of the Action Plan framework is the development of operational, project-based work that focuses on selected and critical mental health topics at a global level.

- A discussion paper and position statement on “Implementing alternatives to coercion in mental health care” has been developed by a Task Force chaired by S. Galderisi and J. Allan, in consultation with Member Societies and the Service User and Family Carer Advisory Group. This work and three case studies linked to it – in Colombia, India and Australia-New Zealand – are supported by the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists. A process is being initiated to support Member Societies to engage with this work in ways that suit their local circumstances.
- A report led by Professor Roger Ng has been published on collaborative work with the World Organization of Family Doctors (WONCA) on competencies in mental health for family doctors.
- A survey of the demography and training of psychiatrists in WPA Member Societies, led by Professor Roger Ng and set to be published in 2020, will give us a first glimpse of the age and gender patterns and the training experiences of our profession worldwide.

The third characteristic of the Action Plan is the attraction of new investment to WPA to support its work, especially through relationships with organizations that share our objectives. We have succeeded in attracting new resources from philanthropy and other sectors, as well as more traditional sources, to support programs.

- An important external investment in our work has come from citiesRISE. We have worked in Nairobi, Chennai and Bogota with our Member Societies and their branches. This work locally and across cities has contributed in several ways to promoting the mental health of disadvantaged young people: by promoting mental health in schools; formulating training curricula for mental health workers and peer supporters; revising training and in-service curricula for psychiatrists and other mental health workers; and preparing the ground for implementing programs of perinatal care in scarce resource countries. This work is scheduled to continue in the next triennium, having been curtailed by the pandemic in early 2020. It records useful ways to engage psychiatrists and other mental health professionals in the community development approach to promoting mental health among young women and men in adversity.
- As incoming President in late 2017 I accepted an invitation from The Lancet medical journal to chair a commission on depression. In discussion with the Executive Committee and the Lancet, it became designated The Lancet-WPA Commission on Depression. Support for the Commission has come from several external sources, including The University of Melbourne, the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, the Wellcome Trust, and UNICEF. The latter two organizations have supported young people with lived experience of depression in consulting on the recommendations and their dissemination. Professor Vikram Patel, member of the Standing Committee on Science, accepted the role of co-editor, and past WPA President and Editor of *World Psychiatry* Professor Mario Maj has had a prominent role in preparing the report, which is due for publication in early 2021. The WPA will be invited to have a continuing role in the life of the Commission.

- As president of WPA, I co-chair the World Economic Forum Global Future Council 2019-2020 on Technology for Mental Health, that aims to promote the ethical adoption of technologies and has worked to facilitate positive working relationships in the field.
- We have also had significant support from more traditional sources. WPA has received for example an unrestricted educational grant from industry to develop the learning management system that now has a critical role in WPA's emergency response as well as its education and communications programs.

As the triennium reached its final months, the world entered a period of turmoil and change with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Psychiatrists and their colleagues in the health professions face extraordinary challenges. WPA quickly responded, bringing together the strength of our member networks, access to experts and tools for sharing across regions to produce a variety of activities and plans. Thanks to the shared engagement of President-elect Afzal Javed, these programs will continue into the next triennium.

Mobilizing for the emergency response began in March 2020 with establishment of the Emergency Response Executive Group. Shortly after, an Advisory Committee for Responses to Emergencies (ACRE) brought together the leaders of the larger Member Societies to facilitate practical and concrete aid to Member Societies in need. The group is fostering education, information collection and the development of local, national and international strategies to cope with the mental health consequences of emergencies. In April 2020, we established an emergency assistance fund and in May we provided funding to colleagues in Nepal for outreach services to support child and adolescent mental health. Since then we also provided and enabled aid in cash and in-kind for personal protective equipment in Ukraine and other parts of the world, and other initiatives such as support for transport in services that had lost access through diversion of resources during the emergency. As of July 2020, ACRE has met four times by video-conference and overseen the establishment and work of two expert sub-groups. One sub-group is supporting telepsychiatry and eMental health initiatives, including the development of an international guide and webinar and

the capacity of advice to individual Member Societies, and the other providing information, education and support for services caring for people with mental ill-health. ACRE has begun to function as a coordinating body for the assessment of emergency needs and the mobilisation of resources and direct support through a range of Member Societies and partners.

Our online library of COVID-19 mental health resources (www.wpanet.org/covid-19-resources) has developed rapidly, with the support of WPA Member Societies and Sections. It provides access to the resources curated by them and other trusted partners, with materials in a variety of languages. It allows users to find many of the COVID-19 resources created across regions and disciplines all in one place. Accelerated development of the WPA education portal and Learning Management System (LMS) has promoted the launch of new education and training modules to support the emergency response. The first of these modules supports psychiatrists in using e-mental health tools. In addition to WPA curricula, the portal allows Member Societies and trusted partners to include courses developed by them and to use ancillary facilities like the webinar technology to support sharing in their regions. This has been requested and enabled, for example, in Central America. The portal also gives ready access to WPA's existing training materials, including the International Competency-Based Curriculum for Mental Health Providers on Intimate Partner Violence and Sexual Violence against Women, available in several languages.

Working with Professor Afzal Javed and Professor Norman Sartorius as the Emergency Response Executive Group, we have ensured the development of a set of procedures to facilitate the continuation of this work where needed in the future. Indeed, with the establishment of ACRE, member societies will be on standby to activate these procedures when they are again, inevitably, needed – with the more well-resourced among them able to offer further support to those with less.

WPA's ability to promote sustainable change in our field of work – in the midst of an emergency or at any time – depends on two main factors. The first is the capacity to collaborate successfully with other organizations. The second is its potential to engage psychiatrists in new challenges. The WPA

has engaged in both these endeavours. It has been able to do this and extend its activities while maintaining a stable financial situation during a period with a number of external challenges. It has been fortunate in the support received from its Member Societies and all other components, its Secretariat and consultants, and from the new sources of philanthropic and development support we set out to attract. Just as fortunate is the message of continuity, as the preparation for the new triennium allows and encourages the extension of current initiatives, including the emergency responses.

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Helen Herrman

WPA President

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