



Message from the President



February 2020

Colleagues,

With a new decade ahead, I want to thank each and every one of you for your contribution in making 2019 so fruitful for WPA. We hosted our World Congress in Lisbon, a Thematic Congress on dementia in Ohrid, and co-sponsored and participated in member society and scientific section congresses in all world regions. Notable among the latter were the scientific section congresses on psychotherapy in Kuala Lumpur and on spirituality and psychiatry in Jerusalem. A major landmark was launching the new WPA website early in the year and the continuing development of its functionality since then.

Further from the public eye, the work of our EC secretaries, Standing Committees, Board and secretariat, and of several task forces and committees contributed to realisation of the [Action Plan](#) as well as the active process of change and advancement for WPA – the details of which I look forward to sharing with you more fully in the next issue of World Psychiatry. The Lancet-WPA Commission on Depression continues its work, spurred on by the premise that organised science provides a strong platform for advocacy, seeking transformational change in response to this urgent and neglected health problem.

2020 promises even more opportunity. This year, we celebrate 70 years of WPA. It was seven decades ago that the first World Congress of Psychiatry was hosted in Paris with our founder Jean Delay bringing together some of the brightest minds in global mental health to share and learn together. This was revolutionary for its time and is a milestone worthy of celebration. Now, with the advent of the internet, it's easy to take for granted the ease with which we can share knowledge and best practice with each other. It is vital that WPA remains at the forefront of using new technologies, producing quality research and educational materials for sharing and, of course, continuing to provide quality forums at which to meet face-to-face, connect and communicate.

Which brings me to our first meeting of this new decade, our [regional congress in St Petersburg](#), Russia on 5-7 May. Our colleagues at the Russian Psychiatric Association have been working diligently to develop a program relevant not only to the region but also to the issues facing psychiatry more broadly.

The theme Interdisciplinary Understanding of Co-Morbidity in Psychiatry: From Science to Integrated Care will explore new perspectives on the comorbidity of mental and somatic disorders, as well as comorbidity among mental disorders themselves. Along with advances in clinical and social fields of psychiatric research, we will consider recent findings in genetics

and epigenetics and how these will influence not only what we research in the next decade, but how we do it as well.

Speakers include Professor Danuta Wasserman, Prof Evgeny Krupitsky, EPA's immediate Past-President, Prof Silvana Galderisi and former WPA President, Prof Norman Sartorius. This is a congress not to be missed! Abstract submission closes very soon, and we urge you to submit yours now via the Congress website and join us in beautiful St Petersburg for stimulating discussion, networking and learning.

Also closing imminently are submissions for the [2020 Jean Delay Prize](#) – made possible thanks to the generous support of Servier. This year we have simplified the application process with online submissions. Don't miss out on nominating any individual you feel has made a noteworthy contribution to psychiatry. As one of the psychiatry's most prestigious prizes, it is a wonderful recognition of some of the richest work being done in psychiatry today.

Finally, under the guidance of the Secretary General Roy Kallivayalil, the WPA secretariat – led by CEO Francesca Sotgiu – has stepped up preparations for our next General Assembly; while some exciting education projects led by Secretary for Education, Roger Ng will bridge the focus of our 2017-2020 Action Plan with the priorities of the 2020-2023 triennium to be led by President-Elect Afzal Javed.

We are only at the beginning of a very special year ahead, and I look forward to the continuing collaboration with all in WPA.

Best wishes
Helen

Professor Helen Herrman AO
WPA President

NEWSLINES

[Nominations for Jean Delay Prize closing tomorrow!](#)

[Mental health of the family and the problem of addictions in the modern world](#)

[WPA Section partners to promote philosophy and humanities in psychiatry](#)

[The 17th Psychiatric Days of Bosnia and Herzegovina](#)

[Canada launches first-ever clinical guidelines on substance use disorders in older adults](#)

[Chilean congress a success in face of social crisis](#)

[First Practice Transformation Workshop in Chennai links mental health professionals to city schools](#)

[Indonesian Psychiatric Association welcomes WPA president to national congress](#)

[Expanding Mental Health Training in Primary Care](#)

[Three months free access to British Medical Association medical student wellbeing survey results](#)



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