

Dear Professor Wasserman and Members of the Nominations Committee,

I am writing to declare my intention to stand for the presidency of the World Psychiatric Association (WPA) and to seek your support.

I am deeply committed to advancing psychiatry globally, strengthening mental health systems, and ensuring that psychiatrists have a clear and influential voice in shaping policy and practice at the highest levels. I hope to build on this commitment in service of the WPA and its member societies.

My platform is centred on three core priorities that reflect both the needs of our profession and the realities faced by patients worldwide.

**I. Mental disorders remain the leading cause of disability globally, with profound consequences for education, workforce participation, productivity, and economic growth. Yet access to quality mental healthcare remains inequitable, and the treatment gap persists across regions.** In the Prague Agreement, I argued that psychiatry must be recognised as a strategic investment. The Agreement, alongside the subsequent Open Letter co-produced in January 2026 and shared with leaders attending the World Economic Forum, emphasised that mental health is fundamental not only to individual wellbeing but also to societal resilience and economic stability. Its endorsement by over 50 national psychiatric associations, in addition to all WPA member societies, reflects the shared urgency of this agenda. As President, I would continue engaging decision-makers at the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and across global financial institutions to ensure that mental health is embedded within development and economic policy frameworks.

**II. I am committed to strengthening the profile and credibility of psychiatrists. Misinformation and disinformation undermine both our profession and public health. It is essential to protect patients, uphold high standards of care, and safeguard the integrity of evidence-based psychiatric treatment.** As a founding member of the “Countering Anti-Psychiatry Narratives” Task Force under the European Psychiatric Association, I have supported efforts to address inaccurate and harmful narratives constructively and collaboratively. As President, I would prioritise reinforcing public trust in psychiatry while fostering open, evidence-informed dialogue.

**III. I believe that equity of opportunity is fundamental to improving outcomes for patients and professionals alike. Robust evidence demonstrates the association between inequality and poor mental health outcomes. To reduce disparities, we must ensure equitable access to opportunities within our profession and across health systems.** These principles have shaped my work throughout my career, including as Presidential Lead for Equality under Dr Adrian James and during my tenure as President of the Royal College of Psychiatrists. Most recently, I chaired the 24-hour global “Women’s Mental Health in Bloom” webathon in partnership with the International Association for Women’s Mental Health, spanning seven regions and addressing key issues across the life course.

With your support, I hope to lead the WPA in promoting inclusive, evidence-driven psychiatry, strengthening mental health systems, and ensuring that our profession has a meaningful and influential global voice.

Dr Lade Smith  
Personal statement  
Application for WPA President-elect

I would be sincerely grateful for your support. Please find attached my signed nomination form and CV for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Smith', with a horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

With warm regards,  
Dr Lade Smith CBE  
President, Royal College of Psychiatrists