

Document Title: **World Psychiatric Association – Section on Co-morbidity
2025 Annual Report**

Document Type: Section annual report

Author: Dan Siskind

Date Created: 04 March 2026



World Psychiatric Association – Section on Co-morbidity 2025 Annual Report

Section Co-Chairs: Dan Siskind & Norman Sartorius
Deputy Chair: Najma Siddiqi
Secretary: Susanna Every-Palmer
Deputy Secretary: Ivona Šimunović Filipčić
Report Submitted By: Dan Siskind
Date: Feb 2026

Overview

The WPA Section on Comorbidity continues to advance global knowledge, research, and clinical understanding of comorbid psychiatric and medical conditions. In 2025, we expanded our membership, deepened international collaborations, and actively contributed to academic and policy discussions around the growing impact of comorbidity in psychiatric care.

Background

The WPA Section on Comorbidity of mental and physical disorders came into existence in 2016. The proposal for its creation argued that it is important that the World Psychiatric Association takes action concerning the physical illnesses of people with mental illness because comorbidity leads to premature death of people with mental illness and significantly decreased quality of life of the sufferers. Given the multiple health issues faced by people with severe mental illness, the section will change its name to the WPA Section of Multimorbidity. The program of the Section continues to include the organization of scientific symposia and other meetings during the World Congresses of Psychiatry, during other scientific meetings and independently, the development of educational materials and webinars concerning comorbidity and its management and the production of WPA position statements based on evidence about Multimorbidity.





Terms of reference of the WPA Action Working Group on Multimorbidity

1. To identify topics related to comorbidity of mental and physical disorders and develop recommendations for WPA's involvement in research, education and service development relevant to dealing with problems related multi-morbidities of this type
2. To identify individuals and centres interested and willing to participate in WPA's program of research and education related to the multi-morbidity of mental and physical disorders
3. To liaise with other WPA Action Plan Working Groups with a view to ensure that problems of comorbidity are considered in the work of these groups
4. To propose the organization of symposia, workshops and other types of meetings
5. To prepare reviews of evidence and drafts of position papers
6. To create training programs

Key Activities in 2025

The Section Officers met quarterly throughout 2025 to progress the work plan of the Section. The current Section Officers are as follows:

Section Officers

<p>Co-Chair</p>  <p>Norman Sartorius (MD, PhD, FRCPsych) President, Association for the Improvement of Mental Health Programmes (AMH) Geneva, Switzerland</p> <p>Contact ↗</p>	<p>Co-Chair</p>  <p>Dan Siskind University of Queensland Faculty of Medicine Woolloongabba Community Health Centre Level 2 Mental Health, 228 Logan Rd, Woolloongabba, QLD, 4102, Australia</p> <p>Contact ↗</p>	<p>Deputy Chair</p>  <p>Najma Siddiqi University of York & Hull York Medical School Department of Health Sciences Room A/RRC/203b, ARRC Building, University of York, Heslington, YORK, YO10 5DD, UK</p> <p>Contact ↗</p>	<p>Co-Secretary</p>  <p>Susanna Every-Palmer Head of Department, Department of Psychological Medicine, University of Otago Wellington, USA</p> <p>Contact ↗</p>
--	--	--	---

1. International Collaborations & Publications

Section members collaborated on cross-national research exploring the complex, bidirectional relationships between mental and physical health, including:

- A Lancet Commission on side effects of psychotropic medications
 - (Halstead S, Yap CX, Warren N, Agarwal SM, Brand B, Chan SKW, Cipriani A, Correll C, Crossley N, D'Ambrosio E, Emsley R, Firth J, Gaughran F, Gee S, Hahn M, Hayes J, Heald A, Howes O, Kane JM, Kapi M, Leucht S, Meyer N, O'Donoghue B, Okeke E, Perry BI, Solmi M, Sommer IE, Srivastava V, Taipale H, Taylor D, Tiihonen J, Young AH, McCutcheon R, Siskind D, Pillinger T. Holistic prevention and management of physical health side-effects of psychotropic medication: a report from The Lancet Psychiatry Physical Health Commission. *Lancet Psychiatry*. 2025;12:673-699.)
- Clinical impacts of multimorbidity among people with severe mental illness

These contributions appeared in high-impact journals, reinforcing the relevance of comorbidity in psychiatric practice and public health. We thank all members who shared their publications related to multimorbidity. A compilation of key publications is available here: [Section of Comorbidity Publications](#). Membership also grew significantly, from 23 members in 2023 to 89 members in 2025, reflecting the increasing global interest in this field, and efforts by section officers to recruit experts in the area from round the world.

2. WPA Congress Participation

We hosted well-attended sessions at the 2025 WPA World Congress in Prague, which generated rich discussions and helped shape future research priorities, particularly around implementation science and integrated care. Highlights included: a "State of the Art Session" on Managing Multi-Morbidity Among Diverse Global Populations by Professors Najma Siddiqi and Dan Siskind. We also contributed to the Expert Corner sessions on Affective Disorders, Schizophrenia, Anxiety, Other Psychoses, Intellectual Disabilities, and Substance Use disorders. For each of these Expert Corner sessions, a member of the WPA Section of Multimorbidity presented on how multimorbidity impacts these disorders.

Our Section met at the WPA meeting in Prague. Our executive was re-elected, and Ivona Šimunović Filipčić was welcomed as Deputy Secretary of the Section.

Looking ahead, we are planning a strong presence at the 2026 WPA Congress in Stockholm, including: a Presidential Symposium on Multi-morbidity, a section symposium, and a section annual meeting.

Acknowledgements

We extend our sincere thanks to all Section members for their ongoing contributions, particularly those who led key research and collaborative initiatives this year. Special thanks to: the WPA Secretariat for continued support; our colleagues across other Sections for their collaborative spirit; and to Nicky Traynor for administrative assistance and coordination.

We look forward to building on this momentum in 2025 and continuing to advance the understanding and management of multimorbidity in psychiatric practice.

For more information or to get involved, please visit our WPA Section page or contact the Section Secretary susanna.every-palmer@otago.ac.nz