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**World Psychiatric Association:** Section on Comorbidity

**Section Co-Chairs:** Dan Siskind & Norman Sartorius

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**Secretary:** Susanna Every-Palmer

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## OVERVIEW

The WPA Section on Comorbidity continues to advance global knowledge, research, and clinical understanding of comorbid psychiatric and medical conditions. In 2023–2026, we expanded our membership, deepened international collaborations, and actively contributed to academic and policy discussions around the growing impact of comorbidity in psychiatric care.

The WPA Section on Comorbidity has partnered with the WPA Working Group on Comorbidity of Mental and Physical Health. 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. The program of our Section includes the organisation of scientific symposia at all WPA Congresses in this triennium and contributions to other meetings during the World Congresses of Psychiatry, including the Specialist Corner multimorbidity presentation. We have been active in other scientific meetings including EPA and SIRS. We have developed educational materials and webinars concerning comorbidity and its management and produced WPA position statements based on evidence about comorbidity and outlining the WPA position on the matter.

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The Section on Comorbidity will continue to:

1. 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 to comorbidities of this type.
2. Identify individuals and centres interested and willing to participate in WPA's program of research and education related to the comorbidity of mental and physical disorders.
3. Liaise with other WPA Sections with a view to ensuring that problems of comorbidity are considered in the work of these groups.
4. Propose the organisation of symposia, workshops and other types of meetings.
5. Prepare reviews of evidence and drafts of position papers.
6. Create training programs.

## KEY ACTIVITIES

The Section Officers met quarterly throughout the triennium to progress the work plan.

### 1. International Collaborations & Publications

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

- Major depression and metabolic syndrome
- Anxiety disorders and cardiovascular risk
- Psychosis and substance use
- Metabolic disorders and schizophrenia

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 on the WPA Section of Multimorbidity home page.

Membership also grew significantly, from 23 members in 2023 to 84 members in 2026, reflecting the increasing global interest in this field, and efforts by section officers to recruit experts in the area from around the world.

Elections for the secretariat of the WPA Section on Comorbidity were held at the Section on Comorbidity meeting at WPA Congress in Prague in October 2025.

## **2. WPA Congress Participation**

We hosted well-attended sessions at the 2023 World Congress in Vienna, the 2024 WPA World Congress in Mexico City and the 2025 World Congress in Prague. These symposia 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 Comorbidity, delivered by Richard Holt and chaired by Ivona Šimunović Filipčić and Gerhard Heinze, and the WPA Section on Multimorbidity Symposium on 17 November 2024 featuring presentations by Ivona Šimunović Filipčić, Richard Holt, David Cawthorpe, and Asiful Haidar Chowdhury. The session was chaired by Norman Sartorius and Ivona Šimunović Filipčić.

Looking ahead, we are planning a strong presence at the 2026 WPA Congress in Stockholm, including a Presidential Symposium.

## **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 the next triennium and continuing to advance the understanding and management of multimorbidity in psychiatric practice.