Title: 2023-2026 Triennium Report for WPA Public Mental Health Special Interest Group

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Structure of 2023-2026 Triennium Report for WPA Public Mental Health Special Interest Group

This triennium report for the WPA Public Mental Health Special Interest Group is divided into the following sections:

A) Members of WPA Public Mental Health Special Interest Group
B) Public mental health context
C) Public mental health and WPA Action Plans
D) Objectives of WPA Public Mental Health Special Interest Group
E) Activities of WPA Public Mental Health Special Interest Group
F) Transition to WPA Public Mental Health Section

A) Members of WPA Public Mental Health Special Interest Group

The work of the following members of the WPA Public Mental Health Special Interest Group is gratefully acknowledged:

- Dr Jonathan Campion (Chair): Director for Public Mental Health, South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust, UK; Cochair of Public Mental Health Section, European Psychiatric Association; Cochair of Public Mental Health Working Group, World Federation of Public Health Associations; Honorary Professor of Public Mental Health, University of Cape Town, South Africa.
- Professor Debasish Basu (Cochair): Professor and Head, Department of Psychiatry, Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, India; Director, WPA Collaborating Centre Chandigarh; Member, World Federation of Mental Health Asia Pacific Advisory Committee; Founding Editor, World Social Psychiatry (official journal of the World Association of Social Psychiatry); President-Elect, Indian Association for Social Psychiatry; International Distinguished Fellow, American Psychiatric Association.

Committee members

- Professor Oye Gureje: Director, WHO Collaborating Centre for Research and Training in Mental Health, Neurosciences, Drug and Alcohol Abuse, University of Ibadan, Nigeria.
- Professor Helen Herrman: Former WPA President (2017-2020); Emeritus Professor of Psychiatry, The University of Melbourne; Board Director, Orygen Youth Mental Health Australia; Director, WHO Collaborating Centre Melbourne, Australia.
- Dr Afzal Javed: Immediate Past President, World Psychiatric Association; Honorary Associate Clinical Professor, Warwick Medical School, University of Warwick, UK.
- Professor Santiago Levin: Vice President and President Elect (2024-2026) of Latin American Association of Psychiatrists; Past President of Association of Psychiatrists of Argentina.
- Dr Kenneth S Thompson: Executive Director, Visible Hands Collaborative; Medical Director, Pennsylvania Psychiatric Leadership Council; Independent Scholar; Past President American Association for Social Psychiatry; Former Medical Director Center for Mental Health Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, US Department of Health and Human Services.

Advisors

- Professor Vinay Lakra: Past President, Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists; Clinical Associate Professor, University of Melbourne; Divisional Director, Mental Health, Northern Health, Australia.
- Professor Crick Lund: Professor of Global Mental Health and Development in the King's Global Health Institute, Health Services and Population Research Department, Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience, King's College London; Professor in the Alan J. Flisher Centre for Public Mental Health, Department of Psychiatry and Mental Health, University of Cape Town, South Africa.

- Professor Sir Michael Marmot: Professor of Epidemiology at University College London; Director of the Institute of Health Equity, UCL Department of Epidemiology & Public Health, UK.
- Professor Norman Sartorius: President, Association for the Improvement of Mental Health Programmes (AMH), Geneva, Switzerland.
- Professor Shekhar Saxena: Professor of the Practice of Global Mental Health at the Department of Global Health and Population at Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health, USA.

Members

- Professor John Allan: Past President of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists; Executive Director of Mental Health Alcohol and other Drugs Branch in Queensland Health, Australia.
- Professor dr Geert Dom: Professor of Psychiatry, University of Antwerp, Belgium; Medical Director PC Multiversum, Boechout, Belgium; Immediate Past President, European Psychiatric Association; Past President of European Federation of Addiction Societies (EUFAS).
- Professor Chris Dowrick: Emeritus Professor, University of Liverpool, UK; General Practitioner, Aintree Park Group Practice, Liverpool, UK; Professorial Research Fellow, University of Melbourne, Australia; Past Chair of World Organisation of Family Doctors (WONCA) Working Party for Mental Health.
- Professor Neeraj Gill: Professor of Adult Psychiatry, School of Medicine and Dentistry, Griffith University, Gold Coast, Australia; Professor, Public Mental Health, Mental Health Policy Unit, University of Canberra, Australia.
- Professor Yueqin Huang: Professor of Psychiatric Epidemiology; Director, Division of Social Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine, Institute of Mental Health, Peking University; President, Chinese Mental Health Journal; Vice President, China Disabled Persons' Federation; Chair Commission of Health and Function, Rehabilitation International.
- Professor Thomas Schulze: President Elect, World Psychiatric Association Chair and Director of the Institute of Psychiatric Phenomics and Genomics, Ludwig-Maximilans-University of Munich, Germany.
- Dr Hanna Tu: Consultant Psychiatrist, Catholic University of Louvain (KU Leuven), Leuven, Belgium.

B) Public mental health context

Mental disorders account for a large proportion of global disease burden due to a combination of high prevalence, most lifetime mental disorders arising before adulthood, and a broad range of impacts. Poor mental wellbeing has a similar broad range of impacts. Effective public mental health (PMH) interventions exist to treat mental disorder, prevent associated impacts, prevent mental disorder from arising and promote mental wellbeing. However, only a minority of those with mental disorder receive any treatment with far less coverage in low- and middle-income countries. Provision of interventions to prevent associated impacts is even lower, and provision of interventions to prevent mental disorder or promote mental wellbeing is negligible. The PMH implementation gap breaches the right to health and results in population scale preventable suffering, broad impacts and associated economic costs. Various reasons account for the gap including insufficient funding with only 2% of global health expenditure allocated to mental health (WHO, 2025a).

The WPA Public Mental Health Working Group defined public mental health as:
A population approach to improve coverage, outcomes and coordination of PMH interventions (Campion et al, 2022). This supports efficient, equitable and sustainable reduction in mental health conditions, promotion of population mental wellbeing and achievement of the UN SDG target of universal coverage.

C) Public mental health and WPA Action Plans

Public mental health (PMH) occupied a central place in in the WPA 2020-2023 Action Plan which was supported by a PMH Working Group https://www.wpanet.org/public-mental-health-working-group/. The WPA's 2023-26 Action Plan was also closely aligned with a PMH approach and highlighted that over the past decade, the WPA has broadened its mission to include the prevention of mental disorder and promotion of good mental health. The WPA Specialist Corner of the WPA 2023-2026 Action Plan https://www.wpanet.org/specialist-corner/ included public mental health as a key cross cutting theme.

D) Objectives of WPA Public Mental Health Special Interest Group

These included to support:

1. Improved implementation of evidence-based PMH interventions in different countries:
    - Highlight opportunities to implement PMH interventions in different cultural contexts.
    - Support translation of evidence into practice.
    - Raise awareness and prioritisation of PMH in national health policies.
    - Support national assessments of unmet PMH needs across diverse populations.
    - Support PMH training including through digital platforms.
    - Work with the WPA Medical Student Special Interest Group.
    - Collaborate with the WPA Service Users and Family Supporters SIG.
    - Support integrated PMH approaches across health systems and sectors
2. WPA associated work including Specialist Corner of the WPA 2023-26 Action Plan and presentations.
3. Collaboration with different organisations
4. Dissemination of PMH relevant work

E) Activities of WPA Public Mental Health Special Interest Group

Between 2023 and 2026, the WPA PMH Special Interest Group continued the activities of the WPA PMH Working Group and carried out related activities including publications, training resources and other WPA supported PMH activities. The WPA PMH Special Interest Group supported the WPA's 2023-26 Action Plan and continued the work of the WPA PMH Working Group to support the following.

1. Meetings of WPA Public Mental Health Special Interest Group

- Regular meetings of the WPA PMH SIG and activities below supported this overarching objective.
- Regular updates of the WPA PMH SIG webpage highlighted resources to support implementation.

2. Specialist Corner of the WPA 2023-26 Action Plan

- WPA President Danuta Wasserman initiated the WPA Specialist Corner as part of the WPA 2023-2026 Action Plan.
- Public mental health was one of six cross cutting themes for each of six mental disorders (affective disorders, anxiety disorders, schizophrenia, other psychoses, substance use and abuse, intellectual impairment). Other cross cutting themes included comorbidity, partnership with people with lived experience, ethics and legal issues, digitalisation, physical exercise and lifestyle.
- Several members of the WPA PMH Special Interest Group became members of the WPA PMH Expert Group for the WPA Specialist Corner which contributed to this work which was chaired by Jonathan Campion who led the contribution of integration of PMH perspectives for each mental disorder.
- Jonathan Campion and Vinay Lakra presented on behalf of the PMH Expert Group at six associated symposia of the Specialist Corner at the WPA Congress in Prague (October, 2025) (see section 7b).

3. Public mental health training

- Public mental health training for psychiatrists has been identified as an important opportunity to address the PMH implementation gap particularly in LMICs.
- Global availability of PMH training is poor particularly in LMICs (Pinto da Costa et al, 2025).
- Components of PMH training were recommended by WPA PMH Working Group (Campion et al, 2022).
- Undergraduate PMH training was also recommended in a WPA report on PMH undergraduate training (Puri & Campion, 2023).
- Examples of PMH training were highlighted on the webpage of the WPA PMH Special Interest Group now at https://www.wpanet.org/section-page/public-mental-health/.
- The WPA Public Mental Health Working Group was previously involved in the development and dissemination of an international survey to explore PMH understanding, practice, training, barriers and opportunities by different sectors together with the European Psychiatric Association, World Organisation of Family Doctors (WONCA), World Federation of Public Health Associations (WFPHA) and GAMIAN-Europe. Results of the survey are being analysed.

- Global Network for Academic Public Health: Jonathan Campion held meetings with GNAPH President John Middleton to support more coordinated working with public health regarding PMH training.

4. Examples of public mental health work

- The WPA PMH Working Group brought together examples of different types of PMH work which is planned for publication.

5. Further work on definition of public mental health

- During 2020-22, members of WPA PMH Working Group spent time defining PMH which was incorporated into a 2022 Lancet Psychiatry article (Campion et al, 2022) (see section B).
- Further discussion concluded that this definition was 'good enough' definition and should continue to be used although psychiatrists including in WPA's PMH Special Interest Group could work to translate PMH definition agreed by WPA's PMH WG into different languages which would not require resource.

6. Collaboration with other organizations

a. World Health Organisation (WHO)

- Website of WPA PMH Special Interest Group highlighted PMH relevant WHO resources.
- Jonathan Campion contributed to a WHO Europe briefing on scaling up mental health in primary care (WHO, 2025b).
- WHO activities limited by US funding cuts and WPA PMH Special Interest Group offered support.

b. World Organization of Family Doctors (WONCA)

- 2023 Public Mental Health Joint Statement by WONCA, WFPHA and WPA.
- Jonathan Campion worked with WONCA as well as World Federation of Public Health Associations (WFPHA) below to submit several PMH symposia for WPA WCPs highlighting importance of coordination with primary care which unfortunately were not accepted.
- Professor Chris Dowrick (Past Chair of WONCA's Working Party for Mental Health) was a member of the PMH Special Interest Group.

c. World Federation of Public Health Associations (WFPHA)

- 2023 Public Mental Health Joint Statement by WONCA, WFPHA and WPA (see above).
- Jonathan Campion is cochair of the WFPHA PMH Working Group. The associated webpage highlights publications by the WPA PMH Working Group and Special Interest Group.

d. Global Network for Academic Public Health: Jonathan Campion held meetings with GNAPH President John Middleton to support more coordinated working with public health regarding PMH training.

e. United Nations

- 2025 UN Political Declaration on NCDs and mental health (UN, 2025): The UN High-Level Meeting on NCDs and Mental Health was held in New York in September 2025 which was the first time in the history of the United Nations that mental health was discussed at the core of a meeting of Heads of State at the General Assembly. It was intended to help governments reach agreements and make commitments on global issues. Jonathan Campion represented WPA and EPA on the associated Taskforce for Mental Health including in order to support required actions to address the PMH implementation gap. Thomas Schulze (WPA President Elect) attended the meeting in September 2025 on behalf of WPA.
- ECOSOC membership opportunity was raised with WPA leadership to enable WPA access to relevant UN events and processes which resulted in membership application.

f. Medecins Sans Frontiers (MSF)

- MSF provides mental healthcare in 75 countries globally and delivered 493,000 mental health consultations in 2023. Jonathan Campion engaged with MSF and chaired a related PMH symposium with Helen Hermann at the 2025 WPA WCP in Prague.
- A subsequent meeting with WPA's Advisory Committee on Response to Emergencies (ACRE) was held including with MSF to discuss how to support coordination of such work including with WPA.

g. UNICEF: Jonathan Campion discussed required action to address the global PMH implementation gap for under 5s following his involvement in an associated RCPsych report (Lamb & Campion, 2023).

7. Dissemination of public mental health relevant work

a. Publications

Publications by the WPA Public Mental Health Special Interest Group:

- Ni MY, Candi MCL, Wan TTW, Campion J, et al. Harnessing the power of constitutional rights and legal frameworks to scale up public mental health implementation. Lancet Psychiatry. 2026;13(4)346-356.
- Campion J, Javed A. Public mental health: a WPA priority and key opportunity to address implementation failure. Neuropsychiatr. 2026;40:11-16.
- Pinto da Costa M, Mulcahy C, Campion J. The case for global public mental health training. BJPsych Advances. 2025;1-3.
- Campion J. Public mental health (update). MindEd e-Learning Programme. e-Learning for Healthcare; 2024.
- World Federation of Public Health Associations, World Organization of General Practitioners and World Psychiatric Association. Public Mental Health Joint Statement; 2023.
- Puri A, Campion J. Public mental health in undergraduate medical training: Current provision and required actions. World Psychiatric Association; 2023.

Publications by the WPA Public Mental Health Special Interest Group built on the publications by the WPA Public Mental Health Working Group outlined at https://www.wpanet.org/section-page/public-mental-health/

b. Presentations

- WPA WCP in Prague (October 2025)
  - WPA President Danuta Wasserman initiated the WPA Specialist Corner as part of the WPA 2023-2026 Action Plan. Public mental health was one of six cross cutting themes for each of six mental disorders (affective disorders, anxiety disorders, schizophrenia, other psychoses, substance use and abuse, intellectual impairment). Other cross cutting themes included comorbidity, partnership with people with lived experience, ethics and legal issues, digitalisation, physical exercise and lifestyle. Jonathan Campion and Vinay Lakra presented on behalf of the Public Mental Health Expert Group at six associated symposia of the Specialist Corner at the WPA Congress in Prague (October, 2025) (see section E2).
  - Medecins Sans Frontiers (MSF): MSF provides mental healthcare in 75 countries globally and delivered 493,000 mental health consultations in 2023. Jonathan Campion chaired a related PMH symposium with Helen Hermann.
- European Psychiatric Association (EPA)
  - EPA Congress in Prague (April, 2026): Jonathan Campion (representing EPA PMH Section and WPA PMH Special Interest Group) presented at the opening forum about leaving no one behind and required actions to address the PMH implementation gap.
  - EPA Congress in Madrid (April, 2025): Jonathan Campion (representing EPA PMH Section and WPA PMH Special Interest Group) presented at a symposium about required action and real-world solutions to address the PMH implementation gap across the European region with Andrea Fiorillo (EPA President), Geert Dom (Past EPA President) and Ledia Lazeri (WHO Europe).
  - EPA Congress in Madrid (April, 2024): Jonathan Campion (representing EPA PMH Section and WPA PMH Special Interest Group) presented at a symposium about smoking and mental health implementation opportunities for real-world solutions including with Geert Dom (EPA President).
- Royal College of Psychiatrists (RCPsych)
  - RCPsych International Congress (June 2026): Jonathan Campion (representing EPA PMH Section and WPA PMH Section) presented at a symposium about the required actions to address the PMH implementation gap for under 5s (including presenters from UNICEF and WHO) and a symposium about required action to address the PMH implementation gap for people with intellectual disability.
  - RCPsych International Congress (June 2025): Jonathan Campion (representing EPA PMH Section and WPA PMH Special Interest Group) presented at a symposium which highlighted an in-press RCPsych PMH orientated report on required actions to address the treatment and prevention gap for eating disorders.

- French Public Health Society: Ken Thompson (representing WPA PMH Special Interest Group) attended Congress on public mental health (November 2025) which spanned clinical and broader initiatives working to make PMH an all systems initiative.
- National Conference of Indian Association for Social Psychiatry public mental health conference in Chandigarh, India (September, 2023): Jonathan Campion and Afzal Javed presented and were involved in the launch of the Chandigarh Charter on Public Mental Health

F) Transition to WPA Public Mental Health Section

In April 2026, the WPA Public Mental Health Special Interest Group combined with the WPA Section on Public Policy and Psychiatry to become the WPA Public Mental Health Section. Elections are currently being organised. The support of Armen Soghoyan (WPA Secretary for Scientific Sections) is gratefully acknowledged.

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