



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT, WPA

Dear Friends,

I would like to take this opportunity to keep you informed of various activities which have been happening since my last communication two months ago.

1. You may recall that in co-operation with Lancet Psychiatry, the WPA set up a Commission (**WPA-Lancet Commission in Psychiatry**) to look at the role of Psychiatry and the Psychiatrists in the first quarter of the 21st century. This is a two stage process with first stage being a qualitative survey of our zonal representatives. This happened at the International Congress in Bucharest and Dr Alex Langford and Dr Joan Marsh conducted focus groups with members of the Council, zonal representatives and other senior psychiatrists. The results have been analysed and we are in the process of developing a quantitative survey. Once that is up and running, I shall inform you and will need your help in making your members and other colleagues to be aware so that a large number of respondents can share their views. We are still expecting the survey to go online within the next six to eight weeks. Lancet Psychiatry hopes to publish reports either towards the end of this year or early next year. When the time comes, please circulate the information about the survey to your members so that we can gather information as widely as possible. These responses will enable us to look at what skills and competencies are essential for the practice of psychiatry and that will lead to how we train future psychiatrists. The next step after the report will be looking at curricula and training matters starting from undergraduate medical training to post-graduate generalist training and subsequent specialist training. Early work has started on revising medical school curricula but we need to ensure that the curricula are fit for purpose for all doctors as well as specialists.
2. Following on from the study of curricula around the world and results of the Commission, WPA is setting up a **Diploma in Mental Health**. I am delighted to report that Professor Allan Tasman has very kindly agreed to co-chair the group with me to try and deliver web-based learning and work with our partners to deliver the high standard qualifications.
3. Three **WPA Collaborating centres** have been established in London (Queen Mary College under the leadership of Professor Kamaldeep Bhui); Bangalore, India (at National Institute of Mental Health and Neurological Sciences) and at Chinese University of Hong Kong (under the leadership of Professor Linda Lam).
4. **September 4th has been identified as the WPA Campaign day-World Mind Matters Day**. We shall be **launching** the WPA Position Statement on Social Justice for the Mentally Ill. Presidential Task Force on mental health of migrants and asylum seekers has delivered its report and we shall be launching that too on this day. A formal launch will also take place later in the year.
5. I am delighted to report that EC agreed to fund a **global study on discrimination in law** especially related to mental health act in various countries. Sir Anand Satyanand-former Governor General of New Zealand and other colleagues are leading on it. Centre for Mental Health and Law at the Law College in Pune has been commissioned to explore these issues and produce a report.
6. EC also agreed to establish **Round Table discussions** on various topics. The format of these meetings will be closed with 20-25 experts from around the globe to meet for 2-3 days to produce position statements, documents for debate and books. If you and your organisation can host these and also help us raise funds for such activities, I will be delighted to hear from you.

We need to shift our focus to outcomes based parity and human rights based equity in resources whether they are for research funding or clinical services. My fervent hope is that project on discrimination will enable us to take this forward. Preliminary communications with WMA, WONCA and WFMH have been very helpful and positive.

In order to improve engagement with residents/trainees and **early career psychiatrists**, a new Section has been approved. EC are looking at ways of improving engagement with medical students.

A new additional Presidential Task Force has been set up to explore the **needs of older adults**.

Like other Task Forces, this too will produce curricula at various levels from undergraduate levels to CME learning and policy implications in their area. Please feel free to circulate these details to your members and if your members want to be part of this or any of these Task Forces or contribute in any way suitable they should contact the chairs directly.

After taking over as lead for **Public Education** Dr Avdesh Sharma has been in contact with many of you to provide media training for those who are interested in it. He can be contacted through the secretariat. Please feel free to utilise his skills and enthusiasm.

Professor Mukesh Haikerwal and Professor Paul Summergrad as co-chairs of special **Task and Finish Group** looking at whether WPA is 'fit for purpose' for the 21st century has had their first meeting. Please feel free to let them have your thoughts.

Dr Bala Raju has very kindly agreed to be the **social media lead** and will be activating the WPA Twitter account: @wpa-geneva

Please feel free to contact me directly with suggestions, comments and issues that you feel are important and the WPA needs to take on board. I look forward to hearing from you.

Dinesh Bhugra, CBE
President, World Psychiatric Association