



# WFMH

## World Federation for Mental Health

### ***MAJOR ACTIVITIES IN 2011***

2009-2011 WFMH Board of Directors

Officers:

President	Deborah Wan (Hong Kong SAR China)
President-Elect	George Christodoulou (Greece)
Immediate Past President	Tony Fowke (Australia)
Treasurer	Helen L. Millar (Scotland, UK)
Corporate Secretary	Larry Cimino (USA)
V.P./Constituency Development	Mohammed Abou-Saleh (Qatar/UK)
V.P./Program Development	Ellen R. Mercer (USA)
V.P./Government Affairs	John Bowis, OBE (UK)

Regional Vice-Presidents:

Africa	Crick Lund (South Africa)
Asia Pacific	Porsche Poh (Singapore)
Eastern Mediterranean	Mohammed Abou-Saleh (Qatar)
Europe	Gabriel Ivbijaro (UK)
Latin America	Sonia Chehil (Guyana/Canada)
North America	Jeffrey Geller (USA)
Oceania	Abd Malak (Australia)

Directors:

Tsuyoshi Akiyama (Japan)  
Yoram Cohen (Israel)  
Anita Everett (USA)  
Dianne Froggatt (Canada)  
Sylvester Katontoka (Zambia)  
Roger Montenegro (Argentina)  
Shridhar Sharma (India)  
Suchada Sakornsatian (Thailand)

WFMH Secretary General

Vijay K. Ganju, PhD

Staff Members:

Elena Berger, Director, Programs and Government Affairs  
Deborah Maguire, Director, Administration  
Diane Tacker, Financial and Administrative Assistant

## World Mental Health Day 2011 (10 October)

The theme selected by the WFMH Board of Directors for World Mental Health Day 2011 was “The Great Push: Investing in Mental Health.” The Secretary General of the United Nations issued a message to mark the day, and the Council of the European Union recommended that EU governments make “optimal use” of World Mental Health Day to raise awareness. The World Health Organization held a Forum at its Geneva headquarters to discuss the huge gap that exists between needs and services, particularly in low-income countries. The former Prime Minister of Norway, Kjell Magne Bondevik, addressed the Forum and described his own experience of a severe episode of depression while in office.

Public education events and campaigns took place in many places around the world. To name a few, they included events in Gambia and Ghana arranged by World Health Organization representatives; the release of a “Homeless, Mental Health and Wellbeing Guide” by a charity in the United Kingdom; a public debate in France organized by a group of NGOs; events arranged in Cochin, India; and a series of events in different German cities sponsored by the Association for Social Psychiatry.

In Canada MediaPlanet, a publisher of independent newspaper supplements, distributed an 8-page insert celebrating the World Mental Health Day theme in newspapers in major cities and sent a press release to major news wires, media outlets and over 5,000 web sites across the country.

In 2011 we noticed an upsurge in mentions and reporting of World Mental Health Day on the web. The WFMH Facebook page attracted many entries, the hashtag #worldmentalhealthday on Twitter “trended” all day on 10 October, and many organizations reported their events on their own Internet sites. Numerous blogs mentioned the Day and discussed mental health matters, including several on newspaper web sites. The Guardian newspaper in the United Kingdom had a special section for the Day. In Australia an online social network, MentaNet, was launched to provide peer support for consumers.

## Planning for World Mental Health Day 2012

In the last months of 2011, work began on the following year’s theme. The topic selected by the WFMH Board for 2012 is “**MAKING THE CONNECTION: Depression and Co-morbidity.**” This continues a campaign the Federation has engaged in for several years to highlight the fact that depression often co-exists with other serious illnesses, and that optimal treatment requires a coordinated approach.

The year 2012 marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of World Mental Health Day, which was founded by WFMH Deputy Secretary General Richard Hunter in 1992. WFMH’s organizers hope that in addition to the 2012 theme the Day will recognize these 20 years of public education, reaching many parts of the world and providing an opportunity for local and regional planners to address issues of importance in their communities.

The Federation appreciates the support of donors who made the preparation of materials for the annual campaigns possible, and the efforts of local workers who created so many events – some serious, some lively, some quite amazing – to help people learn about the widespread prevalence of mental illnesses, the need for good care and treatment, and the value of good mental health.

We look forward to seeing this major WFMH outreach activity continue for many years to come!

### WFMH Great Push for Mental Health

WFMH set up its program called the “Great Push for Mental Health” in 2009 with the aim of promoting mental health onto the international agenda. The program is led by Professor John R.M. Copeland of Great Britain, a former President (2007-2009) of the Federation. It recognizes that if there is to be an advance for mental health across the world, it must be led ultimately by governments but can also be influenced by grassroots actions. The Great Push was supported by an international meeting held by WFMH in Washington DC on 16 November 2010, and by the Summit Meeting of the Movement for Global Mental Health in Cape Town in October 2011— with which WFMH maintains a strategic alliance—just before the WFMH Congress. It was further encouraged by two meetings organized by the Federation in New York in October, one for non-profit organizations and the other featuring a panel of ministers and health officials attending the United Nations General Assembly High-Level Meeting on Non-Communicable Diseases. (For further information on these meetings, see “WFMH Activities at the United Nations,” below.)

The WFMH Great Push for Mental Health has now signed up to its mental health cause 500 organizations from 109 countries. We are grateful for their support. In response to the decision by the World Health Organization’s Executive Board to support the development of a new Action Plan on mental health, WFMH is determined to keep up the international pressure. The WFMH Board has agreed to a survey of the 500 organizations to identify the priorities they would wish to see in the WHO Action Plan. In addition, a Delphi survey will be undertaken to identify the major priorities which will contribute to a WFMH-initiated “People’s Charter for Mental Health” that sets out what civil society expects of governments. Steps to increase the momentum will help to recruit more governments to the cause. Meanwhile, in alliance with the Movement for Global Mental Health we press strongly for a UN High-Level Meeting for Mental, Neurological and Substance Use Disorders including the dementias.

Mental health is at last moving forward internationally but we still need your help. If you and your organization are not already signed up to the surveymonkey website below, please sign up now to add your organization’s voice and to participate in the survey. WFMH is working for all of us who value mental health and are deeply concerned about the lack of care for mental disorders.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/wfmhgp>

## Singapore Conference

The 1<sup>st</sup> Asia-Pacific Mental Health Conference was held in Singapore on 4-5 March 2011, hosted by the Health Promotion Board of Singapore and co-sponsored by WFMH. The program included presentations on mental health investment in Japan, Thailand, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Australia. Other topics included measuring mental wellbeing in an Asian context, developing a mental wellbeing measure for Singapore, child mental health in Singapore, combating stigma and encouraging early treatment. A panel reviewed ways of applying Western approaches to mental health in Asian cultures. WFMH Board members who participated included President Tony Fowke (Australia), President Elect Deborah Wan (Hong Kong, SAR China), Dr. Tsuyoshi Akiyama (Japan), and Porsche Poh, the Executive Director of Silver Ribbon (Singapore). At the end of the meeting participants were invited to site visits at the Institute of Mental Health, the Singapore Association for Mental Health, Singapore Anglican Community Services, and Silver Ribbon (Singapore).

## Suicide Prevention Workshop

On 25 March 2011 the Charles E. Kubly Foundation and WFMH held a one-day workshop to pilot a suicide prevention program: *“Developing a Global Suicide Prevention Program for Families Caring for People with Serious Mental Illness.”* The session was held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA and was attended by representatives of local NAMI chapters. It was led by Sally Kubly, Executive Director of the Foundation, and Diane Froggatt, a WFMH Board member.

This workshop was the final activity of a joint suicide prevention project undertaken by WFMH with the World Fellowship for Schizophrenia (which merged with WFMH in 2010). In November 2010 a WFSAD-WFMH print publication was released, *“Mental Illness and Suicide: A Family Guide to Facing and Reducing the Risks.”* It contained a workshop guide on facilitating training programs for organizations working with family members and carers, together with a Spanish translation and a copy of the material on CD. The Milwaukee workshop enabled Diane Froggatt, the project leader, to implement and review the material with local members of NAMI, a leading consumer and family organization.

## WFMH World Congress, Cape Town, 17-21 October 2011

WFMH held its biennial World Congress in South Africa in 2011, at the Cape Town International Convention Centre on the theme *“African Footprint in Global Mental Health.”* Registrations totaled 1,019, a tribute to the excellent preparatory work of the organizers. Seventeen local mental health associations were involved in the planning, which was led by Ingrid Daniels, Director of the Cape Mental Health Society. Brian Robertson, recently retired from the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Cape Town, headed the Scientific Program

Committee. Honoring the theme, the program featured many African speakers among those giving keynote addresses, and there were four special WFMH lectures: the George Albee lecture on primary prevention; the Margaret Mead lecture on culture and mental health; the Mary Hemingway-Rees lecture on spirituality and mental health; and the World Mental Health Day lecture. The Albee lecture recognizes a significant WFMH interest in the prevention of mental disorders, while the Mead and Hemingway-Rees lectures are named for two people important in the Federation's early history.

In conjunction with the WFMH Congress, the Movement for Global Mental Health held its second meeting immediately before the opening ceremony. The Movement originated from the 2007 Lancet journal series on global mental health, and the first meeting was held before the 2008 WFMH World Congress in Athens, Greece.

### **WFMH Membership Assembly, Board of Directors Elections and Annual Board Meeting**

At the Membership Assembly on 19 October 2011 in Cape Town Deborah Wan took office as President of WFMH for a two-year term. She has retired from 28 years as Chief Executive of New Life Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association in Hong Kong, and became President Elect in 2009. The new President Elect is George Christodoulou, Emeritus Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Athens, Greece and President of the Hellenic Center for Mental Health and Research. Tony Fowke, a leader of family caregiver organizations in Australia whose term as President ended at the 2011 Assembly, is Immediate Past President.

The 2011 elections to the WFMH Board of Directors were ratified at the Membership Assembly in Cape Town. Ten new Board members were selected by the Voting Member Organizations to fill the places of members whose terms had expired. In total there are currently 22 Board members from 15 countries.

The Executive Committee met in Cape Town, following which the Board of Directors met twice, on 19 and 21 October, to work through the agenda of their Annual Meeting.

A new Letter of Agreement was signed with the Secretary General, Vijay K. Ganju, on 18 October.

### **WFMH World Congress in Argentina in 2013**

The next Congress of the World Federation for Mental Health will be held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on 25-28 August 2013. The host organization is the Argentine Association of Mental Health (AASM), a WFMH voting member that is well experienced in arranging large conferences. The conference web site is <http://www.wmhc2013.aasm.org.ar/en/home>

## WFMH Activities at the United Nations

WFMH activities at the United Nations were focused in 2011 on the *High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs)* on 19-20 September. It was only the second time that the General Assembly had held such a meeting on a health matter. The agenda covered cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes and chronic respiratory illnesses. WFMH worked to secure recognition of mental illness as another important non-communicable disease, and one closely associated with many other illnesses in this category.

Advocacy started in the first half of the year at meetings of the World Health Organization (WHO), a UN agency. Statements from the Federation were submitted to the WHO Executive Board in January and then to the WHO World Health Assembly in May, where the WFMH Main Representative in Geneva, Myrna Lachenal, was able to read the second statement into the formal record of the meeting. The Secretary General, Vijay Ganju, attended WHO's Global Forum for Non-Governmental Organizations on NCDs in Moscow on 27 April. He then prepared a "Civil Society Statement" for the 16 June Interactive Hearing for NGOs at the United Nations in New York, and gathered the support of 68 national and international organizations for it. Dr. Ganju attended the 16 June meeting with Nancy Wallace, WFMH's Main Representative to the United Nations in New York.

With the support of an anonymous foundation Dr. Ganju arranged a symposium in New York on 18 September, immediately before the UN High-Level Meeting, addressed by several senior international health officials. Their countries were leaders in efforts to increase attention at the UN meeting to mental illness as an important NCD. The speakers were Syeda Hameed, Minister of State and Member, Planning Commission of India; Nils Daulaire, Director, Office of Global Health Affairs, Health and Human Services, USA; Helvecio Miranda Magalhaes Junior; Vice Minister of Health, Brazil; and Leslie Ramsammy, Minister of Health, Guyana. Health representatives of Canada and Israel attended the event. This meeting was endorsed by ten other organizations that also joined with WFMH in arranging an informal consultation on mental health as an NCD, held at Cornell Weill Medical Center in New York on 17 September. Several WFMH Board members were able to attend the 18 September meeting, in addition to the Federation's New York UN representatives.

Only a small improvement in the language about mental health was included in the outcome document of the UN High-Level Meeting. However the advocacy efforts by WFMH and other organizations throughout 2011 helped to produce a significant result at the WHO Executive Board's meeting in January 2012, when a decision was made to send a Resolution on Mental Health to the WHO Assembly in May with a recommendation that it be accepted. It is hoped

that this will improve the place of mental health in overall health planning by the member nations through a new WHO Action Plan to be submitted in 2013.

WFMH Volunteer Representatives at the United Nations in New York during 2011 were Nancy Wallace, Linda Conte and Ricki Kantrowitz. Nancy Wallace provided invaluable support in making New York arrangements for the 18 September symposium, and Linda Conte and Ricki Kantrowitz provided additional assistance at the event.

### UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)

The Federation has for many years taken a considerable interest in the work of the UN Commission on the Status of Women. In 2011 WFMH sponsored two side events at the 55<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission, on “Promoting Women’s Mental Health and Well Being in the Workplace” (2 March) and “The Impact of HIV/AIDS and Mental Health for Asian Women” (3 March).

### NGO Committee on Mental Health at the UN

WFMH participates in the activities of the NGO Committee on Mental Health, a coalition of mental health organizations engaged in advocacy at the UN. Nancy Wallace, WFMH’s Main Representative, is a former chair of the NGO Committee and is Co-Convenor of its Working Group on Trauma and Mental Health. Linda Conte is Vice-Chair of the NGO Committee and is a Co-Convenor of the Committee’s Working Group on Children, Youth and Mental Health. Ricki Kantrowitz is a member of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women.

### NGO Activities in Geneva

Myrna Lachenal and Anne Yamada were WFMH’s volunteer representatives in Geneva in 2011 to the UN Offices there and the World Health Organization. Anne Yamada attended the WHO Executive Board meeting in January as the Federation’s observer, and Myrna Lachenal attended the WHO Assembly in May. Ms. Lachenal also represented WFMH at a WHO Consultation on the harmful use of alcohol in December. Both attended various NGO events and briefings during the year, particularly those concerned with preparation for the UN High-Level Meeting in New York in September. They were active with the Alliance for Health Promotion, the NGO Forum for Health, the Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the UN, and the Commission on the Status of Women, Geneva.

### Other WFMH Activities in 2011

The WFMH Board of Directors has decided to formalize the Federation’s alliance with the *International Network for Person-Centered Medicine*. WFMH was a collaborating organization

in the Fourth Geneva Conference on Person-centered Medicine (30 April-4 May), where it was represented by Board members George Christodoulou, Roger Montenegro, Mohammed About Saleh and Helen Millar.

WFMH is a member of the *PreVAil Network (Preventing Violence Across the Lifespan Research Network)*, an international research group funded by the Canadian Institutes for Health Research. The major focus of its work is the prevention of child maltreatment and intimate partner violence. Professor Helen Herrman, a WFMH Board member until October 2011, is one of the Principal Investigators. She and staff member Elena Berger attended a PreVAil meeting in Toronto on May 11-12.

WFMH continues to work with the international network *Dialogue on Diabetes and Depression* in which it is represented by Board members Helen Millar and Larry Cimino. In October they held a series of workshops in southern Africa on behalf of the Dialogue.

### **Promotion of Mental Health and Prevention of Mental and Behavioral Disorders**

Since 2000 WFMH has been in partnership with the Clifford Beers Foundation of the UK and the Carter Center, Atlanta, USA, as founding organizers of the *World Conferences on Promotion of Mental Health and Prevention of Mental and Behavioral Disorders*. These areas have been a core interest of the Federation for many years. Conferences have been held in Atlanta (2000), London (2002), Auckland (2004), Oslo (2006), Melbourne (2008) and Washington, D.C. (2010). During 2011 WFMH participated in planning for the Seventh World Conference, which will be held in Perth, Australia, on 17-19 October 2012 ([www.perth2012.org](http://www.perth2012.org)). The Clifford Beers Foundation will be the host of this conference with responsibility for the local arrangements.