

53rd DIRECTING COUNCIL

66th SESSION OF THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE OF WHO FOR THE AMERICAS

Washington, D.C., USA, 29 September-3 October 2014

CD53.R7
Original: Spanish

RESOLUTION

CD53.R7

PLAN OF ACTION ON MENTAL HEALTH

THE 53rd DIRECTING COUNCIL,

Having reviewed the *Plan of Action on Mental Health* (Document CD53/8);

Recognizing that there is a high prevalence of mental and substance use disorders in the world and that this is a major contributor to morbidity, disability, and premature mortality, and that, in addition, there is a wide treatment gap;

Understanding that there is no health without mental health, conceptualized not only as the absence of disease, but as a “state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community”;¹

Considering that, in 2009, the Directing Council of PAHO adopted the *Strategy and Plan of Action on Mental Health*; and that, in 2013, the World Health Assembly approved the *Comprehensive Mental Health Action Plan 2013-2020*, and that also that same year, PAHO adopted its Strategic Plan 2014-2019, it is advisable and necessary to update our regional Plan of Action on Mental Health and align it with the PAHO Strategic Plan and with the WHO comprehensive mental health action plan;

Recalling key international human rights instruments, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;

¹ World Health Organization. [Comprehensive mental health action plan 2013-2020](#), annex, p. 3 (2013).

Observing that the Plan of Action on Mental Health addresses the lines of action fundamental for responding to the various of mental health needs of the countries,

RESOLVES:

1. To approve the *Plan of Action on Mental Health* and its implementation in the context of the special conditions of each country, in order to respond to current and future mental health needs.
2. To urge Member States, as appropriate to their national context, to:
 - a) include mental health and mental health promotion as a priority within national health policies, in order to ensure the implementation of mental health plans that consider the deficit and unequal distribution of resources in some countries;
 - b) strengthen, develop, review and, if necessary, reform country legal frameworks and their implementation, in order to protect the human rights of people with mental disorders;
 - c) support the involvement of civil society, and in particular user and family-member associations, in the planning and implementation of activities to promote and protect the mental health of the population;
 - d) promote universal and equitable access to comprehensive, community-based mental health care for the entire population, through strengthening the response capacity of mental health systems and services within the framework of integrated service networks with particular emphasis on reducing the existing treatment gap;
 - e) continue efforts to shift from a psychiatric-hospital centered model to a community-based model that integrates a mental health component into primary health care and general hospitals, and that establishes decentralized mental health services close to where people live;
 - f) ensure an appropriate response by mental health services to the particular characteristics of vulnerable or special-needs groups;
 - g) ensure delivery of mental health services and psychosocial support in emergencies and disasters;
 - h) consider the strengthening of human resources in the field of mental health development as a key component in the improvement of the response capacity of services and in particular primary care, for which regular training programs are essential;
 - i) foster intersectoral initiatives to promote mental health and prevent mental disorders, with particular attention to the life course and addressing stigma and discrimination directed at people with mental disorders;
 - j) undertake specific suicide prevention interventions that include improvement of information and surveillance systems;

- k) bridge the existing mental health information gap through improvements in the production, analysis, and use of information, as well as through research;
 - l) strengthen multisectoral governmental partnerships, and partnerships with nongovernmental organizations, academic institutions, and other key social actors.
3. To request the Director to:
- a) support Member States in the preparation, review, strengthening, and implementation of national mental health plans and legal frameworks that use this Plan of Action as a reference, endeavoring to correct inequities and giving priority to care for vulnerable and special-needs groups;
 - b) collaborate in the assessment of mental health programs and services in the countries so that appropriate actions are undertaken based on an existing situation assessment;
 - c) prepare and disseminate among the Member States a complementary technical document with recommendations on practical options for implementing this plan in the countries, and on measurement of the suggested indicators;
 - d) facilitate the dissemination of information and the sharing of experiences, and promote technical cooperation among the Member States;
 - e) promote partnerships with governmental and nongovernmental organizations, as well as with international organizations and other regional and subregional entities in support of the comprehensive response that is required in the process of implementing this Plan of Action.

(Sixth meeting, 1 October 2014)