



PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION
WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION



43rd DIRECTING COUNCIL
53rd SESSION OF THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE

Washington, D.C., USA, 24-28 September 2001

RESOLUTION

CD43.R10

MENTAL HEALTH

THE 43rd DIRECTING COUNCIL,

Acknowledging the increasing contribution of mental disorders to the global burden of disease and the social and economic costs associated with mental health problems in the Americas;

Taking into account that, despite all efforts made in the Region to highlight and reduce the negative impact of mental health problems, in many places mental health services continue to be poorly funded and organized and people who suffer from mental disorders still have no access to proper treatment;

Cognizant of the new alternatives available in mental health care as a result of the development of new procedures and interventions that have proven to be effective in the treatment and rehabilitation of most mental disorders; and

Considering the significant opportunity for the improvement of mental health care and the promotion of mental health in the Region provided by the awareness and enthusiasm generated by the celebration of World Health Day 2001,

RESOLVES:

1. To urge Member States to:
 - (a) capitalize on the momentum created by the celebration of World Health Day 2001, the discussion of mental health topics at the World Health Assembly, and the focus of the World Health Report 2001 to highlight the importance of including mental health among public health priorities;

- (b) intensify actions to reduce stigma and discrimination against people with mental health problems by providing adequate information and education and addressing issues of parity;
- (c) consolidate national efforts to implement mental health policies and plans within the framework of health sector reform by strengthening mental health units in the ministries of health and mobilizing needed resources;
- (d) continue to develop strategies aimed at shifting mental health care from psychiatric hospitals to community-based care, integrating mental health in primary care and transferring inpatient units for acute patients to general hospitals;
- (e) actively promote and support the implementation of psychosocial rehabilitation programs, including areas such as housing, vocational training, and employment;
- (f) make efforts to develop and update legal provisions protecting human rights of people with mental disabilities and promote the participation of consumers and families in mental health care;
- (g) strengthen the development of services and programs to meet the specific needs of women, children, the elderly, refugees, victims of disasters, and indigenous populations;
- (h) reinforce multisectoral approaches to mental health, thereby reinforcing collaboration with all other sectors involved in mental health care and promotion, such as education, social welfare, labor, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and the private sector;
- (i) promote community and family participation in the care of individuals suffering from mental disorders and actions to promote mental health.

2. To request the Director to:

- (a) strengthen regional technical cooperation capacities, especially in taking action against stigma and discrimination, enhancing the capacities of countries to manage mental health plans, and mobilizing resources for mental health programs;
- (b) encourage Member States to collaborate in producing and disseminating information on cost-effective mental health interventions and in designing and evaluating demonstration projects;

- (c) assist Member States to work toward the provision of essential treatment for the most prevalent mental disorders;
- (d) continue supporting the inclusion of mental health in all health forums and activities and facilitating the establishment of partnerships with other institutions and agencies that can make a significant contribution to the promotion of mental health in the Americas;
- (e) disseminate information about advances made in the Region in recent years.

(Seventh meeting, 27 September 2001)