

Resolution on the inclusion of Mental Health in Universal Health Coverage

An official statement from the Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice (formerly the American Orthopsychiatric Association)

The Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice embeds its work in principles of human rights and social justice and is committed to universal health coverage (UHC) that boldly includes the promotion of mental health and wellbeing. As part of the 74th session of the UN General Assembly, a one day high-level meeting (HLM) on Universal Health Coverage (September 23) as well as a high-level Sustainable Development Summit (September 24 and 25) will bring together heads of state, national leaders, policy makers, civil society, the private sector and champions of UHC, including the Global Alliance. On this platform the Global Alliance strongly advocates for *delivering the human right to health*, inclusive of mental health care for all.



Mental health disorders are among the world's leading causes of disability. The numbers are staggering:

- 1 in 4 people will be affected by mental or neurological disorders at some point in their lives.
- About 450 million people are now struggling with mental health disorders and/or addictions.

As the world comes together for the UN HLM, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide an opportunity for the global community to prioritize the promotion of mental health. The great majority of people with behavioral health problems, including mental health and substance use disorders, receive little to no treatment. If UHC is to be achieved, mental health and behavioral health care must be integrated fully into UHC, from the systems (policy) levels to the community-based (individual) levels of care. Access to behavioral health services, including a skilled mental health workforce, must be an integral part of primary health services. Resources must also ensure that professional and paraprofessional behavioral health workforce is trained and skilled in evidence-based prevention, assessments and early-interventions, and treatments (to include referral pathways). Programs must be comprehensive and engage key stakeholders such as civil society, professional associations, researchers, donors and educators to build and sustain truly comprehensive UHC.

In keeping with our values and our approach, we call upon Member States to reaffirm the WHO Mental Health Gap Action Program (mhGAP) with goals of scaling up mental health services in non-specialized health settings, reducing the mental health treatment gap, and enhancing the capacity of States to provide services that are available and adaptable to

specific country and cultural contexts. In short, inclusion of mental health services within UHC must be incorporated within country-level policies and plans, resourced, and implemented in culturally relevant ways, using evidence-driven interventions that are monitored and evaluated.

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| <p style="text-align: center;">Additional Resources</p> <p>UHC2030 https://www.uhc2030.org/</p> <p>SDG Summit 2019 https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgsummit/home</p> <p>Civil Society Engagement Mechanism for UHC2030 https://csemonline.net/un-hlm-on-uhc/</p> <p>Lancet Commission on Global Mental Health and Sustainable Development https://globalmentalhealthcommission.org/</p> <p>World Health Organization https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/primary-health/vision.pdf</p> <p>Mental Health Gap Action Program (mhGAP) https://www.who.int/mental_health/mhgap/en</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Relevant Articles in the <i>American Journal of Orthopsychiatry</i></p> <p>Gil-Rivas, V., Handrup, C., Tanner, E., & Walker, D. (2019). Global mental health: A call to action. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/ort0000373</p> <p>Godoy, L., Carter, A.S. (2013). Identifying and Addressing Mental Health Risks and Problems in Primary Care Pediatric Settings: A Model to Promote Developmental and Cultural Competence. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/ajop.12005</p> <p>Kimbrough-Melton, R. J. (2013). Health for all: The promise of the affordable health care act for racially and ethnically diverse populations. <i>American Journal of Orthopsychiatry</i>, 83(2-3), 352-358. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/ajop.12042</p> <p>Oppenheim, J., Stewart, W., Zoubak, E., Donato, I., Huang, L., & Hudock, W. (2016). Launching forward: The integration of behavioral health in primary care as a key strategy for promoting young child wellness. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/ort0000149</p> <p>Scott, V. C., Kenworthy, T., Godly-Reynolds, E., Bastien, G., Scaccia, J., McMickens, C., . . . Wandersman, A. (2017). The Readiness for Integrated Care Questionnaire (RICQ): An instrument to assess readiness to integrate behavioral health and primary care. <i>American Journal of Orthopsychiatry</i>, 87(5), 520-530. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/ort0000270</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">How You Can Help</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Join our Global Mental Health Task Force. Learn more at www.bhjustice.org/global-mental-health. • Read our statements and follow our blog for the Global Alliance at the UN HLM on UHC and side events. • Raise awareness #GA4UHC • Join a coalition focused on mental health. | |