

Bulletin of the Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Rehabilitation Unit



April 2007

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The Bulletin of the Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Rehabilitation Unit of the Pan American Health Organization / World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) is issued with the purpose of informing about important advances, news and publications in the areas of mental health, alcohol and substance abuse, rehabilitation and the protection of human rights within this context. In particular, the Bulletin focuses on those activities related to the technical assistance provided by PAHO/WHO to different actors in the Region. We hope it will become a useful tool for all those working in this important field of public health all over the Americas.

The Unit Team

"Transcultural Mental Health in a Changing World: Building a Global Response"
2007 Official Motto

10th October, "World Mental Health Day"

Policy, Legislation, Service Planning and Human Rights



WHO
Mental Health
Policy
Project

*Our vision is that governments meet the
health care needs of people with mental
disorders and promote their human rights*

[:: Addressing needs, improving services \[pdf 165kb\]](#)

People with mental health disorders often face stigma, discrimination, grave violation of their human rights and lack of comprehensive and effective mental health services or difficulty in gaining access to them. In response to this need, the WHO has developed the Mental Health Policy Project, designed to assist countries with capacity building through access to educational materials, practical guidance and collaborative consultation with WHO/PAHO experts in order to create and implement national mental health policies plans, legislation, and services which can effectively address mental health needs in countries

The modules of the Mental Health Policy and Service Guidance Package include:

1. Mental Health Context
2. Mental Health Policy, Plans and Programmes
3. Organization of Services for Mental Health
4. Mental Health Financing
5. Mental Health Legislation and Human Rights
6. Advocacy for Mental Health
7. Quality Improvement for Mental Health
8. Planning and Budgeting to Deliver Services for Mental Health
9. Improving Access and Use of Psychotropic Medicines
10. Mental Health Information Systems
11. Human Resources and Training for Mental Health
12. Child and Adolescent Mental Health
13. Research and Evaluation of Mental Health Policies and Services
14. Workplace Mental Health Policies and Programmes

In addition, WHO has developed a **Resource Book on Mental Health, Human Rights and Legislation**.

Electronic versions of the modules can also be downloaded from the following web site:

http://www.who.int/mental_health/policy

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Disseminating Screening and Brief Interventions in Primary Health Care The Experience in Brazil

Maristela Monteiro, MD, PhD

PAHO's Regional Advisor on Alcohol and Substance Abuse

A model program for wide dissemination of *brief interventions* is being implemented in Ribeirão Preto, Estado de São Paulo. Coordinated by Dr Erickson Furtado, from the Department of Psychiatry at the State University of São Paulo, the program has received initial support from the World Health Organization -WHO- and now runs independently, in collaboration with the State of São Paulo's Health Department.

The program trains primary care professionals in the use of the "*Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test*" -AUDIT- and provision of *brief interventions*. Health professionals come mostly from programs of family health and work at primary health care centers (Unidades Básicas de Saúde- UBS). The Secretary of Health funds the partnership (since 2006 with permanent staff). Since 1999, they have trained about 400 health professionals plus 200 health administrators; training is conducted on average twice a month, for about 25 health professionals each time. The professionals are usually referred by the municipality. The Department of Psychiatry provides regular supervision, organizes seminars or conferences to keep the topic of excessive alcohol use "alive", and collaborates with mental health and HIV/AIDS/STD units of the Health Department. Trained professionals are then followed up on how many screenings and interventions they do, with focal groups discussions. They also work with health administrators to assess how they respond to alcohol problems and identify barriers and opportunities to incorporate the intervention in health centres.

The program plans to cover 25 municipalities, of which 6 are already active: Ribeirão Preto, Batatais, Altinópolis, Cássia dos Coqueiros and Santa Cruz da Esperança. They provide supervision to other regions of São Paulo state too. Most of the program is run with local resources from the municipalities. While there are other attempts to integrate *screening and brief interventions* in Brazil, this comprehensive program can be seen as a model which can be adapted to other countries in the region. The program is not only providing training but also supervision, advocacy around alcohol related topics, links to mental health services and evaluation of training. Furthermore, it is working in a real partnership with the health authorities from the different municipalities.

News from PAHO's Technical Cooperation Program in Panama and Cuba

Dr. Marcia Basaco and Dr. Alejandro Garcia - from Cuba- took part in the National Workshop organized to discuss the reformulation of Panama's Mental Health Plan and shared their expertise in the field of child and youth mental health and community mental health respectively.

Professionals from all over the country participated in the Workshop and discussed the priorities in the field of mental health for the next three years. They also laid the basis for the development of a Mental Health Program based on primary care, which will be implemented, as a local experience, in the Municipality of San Miguelito, Province of Panama.

Two experts from Panama will be soon visiting Cuba to share their own experiences: Dr. Yadira Boyd, specialist in alcohol and substance abuse programmes, and Dr. Edgar Guerrero, as the coordinator of the experience in San Miguelito.

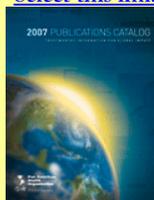
Communication Tools for the Development of Healthy Settings, 1a. ed. (Only in Spanish)

<http://paltex.paho.org/boodetail.asp?bookId=PXE46>



The Pan American
Health Organization
announces the
*Publications Catalog
2007* in electronic format.

[Select this link](#)



Rosalynn Carter Fellowships for Mental Health Journalism 2007-2008

Applications are now being accepted for six one-year journalism fellowships with the Carter Center Mental Health Program.

http://www.cartercenter.org/documents/CC%20MHE%20Bro%2007_K_Final.pdf

Coming EVENTS

-Tercer Congreso Iberoamericano sobre Trastornos Adictivos, April 12-14, 2007, Buenos Aires, Argentina, cita2007@fibertel.com.ar

- XI Conferencia Latinoamericana de Comunidades Terapéuticas, April 12-14, 2007, Buenos Aires, Argentina, congresofonga@expoam.com

- Segundo Congreso Internacional de Psiquiatría Biológica April 17-21, 2007, Santiago de Chile, www.wfsbp.org

- WPA, Regional Meeting , **Seoul, Korea**, April 18-21, 2007, <http://www.wpa2007seoul.org>

- "XXIII Argentinean Congress of Psychiatry", April 19-22, 2007, Mar del Plata, Argentina, www.apsa.org.ar. Co-sponsored by WPA

- II Simposio de Psiquiatría Transcultural: Salud Mental en el Paciente de América Andina, May 3-4, 2007, Barcelona, España, casas@vhebron.net

- VI Simposio Internacional "Aspectos Biológicos y Farmacoterapéuticos de los Trastornos Mentales", La Habana, Cuba, June 18-22, 2007, ccunp@infomed.sld.cu

- Congreso Latinoamericano de Adicciones: Adicciones un Desafío a la Mente", Medellín, Colombia, July 26-29, 2007, congresoalad2007@gmail.com