



Bulletin of the Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Rehabilitation Unit

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The Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Rehabilitation Unit of the Pan American Health Organization / World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO), is pleased to send you a new issue of its Bulletin. The purpose of this publication is to communicate important advances, news, and information on publications in the fields of mental health, the control of alcohol and substance abuse, rehabilitation, and the international protection of human rights. The main objectives of the Unit are to strengthen the countries' capacity to develop mental health policies, plans, programs, and services; formulate public policies for the control of alcohol abuse; prevent disabilities and achieve equal opportunities for people with disabilities; and promote and protect the human rights and fundamental liberties of people with disabilities and their families. In this issue, the bulletin highlights advances in the promotion and protection of the human rights of people with mental illness.

Developing Mental Health Services Research in Latin America and the Caribbean

Mexico City, México, December 2006

The Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Rehabilitation Unit of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), in cooperation with the Division of Social and Epidemiologic Research of the National Institute of Psychiatry Ramón de la Fuente of Mexico City, hosted the annual conference on "Strengthening Mental Health Services Research in Latin America and the Caribbean," aimed at increasing the capacity of mental health research in those countries.

The main idea behind the conference was to identify young researchers from the Region, interested in contributing to studies on mental health, to facilitate their entrance and retention into the mental health services research, to enhance the investigation and information sharing network in the Hemisphere, and to create partnerships between well established researchers in the United States, Canada, Latin American and Caribbean Countries. In addition, the conference intended to identify

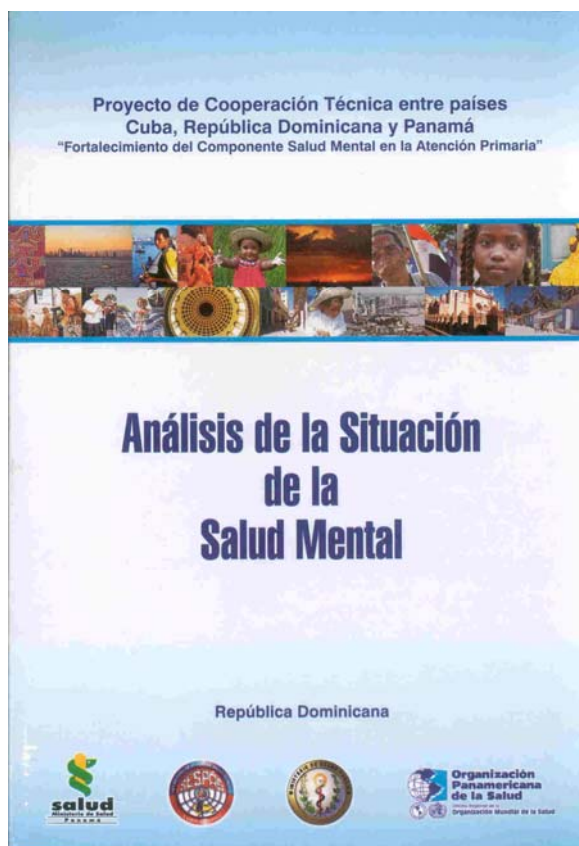


those prospective centers to become Centers of Excellence on mental health services research, strengthening their research and training capacities, and to promote the grants submissions to the different research agencies.

The conference was inaugurated by Dr. Gustavo Bergonzoli the PAHO / WHO Mexico, the PAHO's Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Rehabilitation Unit Chief, Dr. Jorge J. Rodriguez, Dr. Maria Elena Medina Mora of the National Institute of Psychiatry Ramón de la Fuente, and

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Dr. Karen Babich from the National Institute of Mental Health. The conference included workshops and working groups in topics like challenges and opportunities for mental health services research in the Region, funding mechanisms for research projects, writing research proposals, and implementation of research projects. The best projects elaborated by young researchers from the participant countries (Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Jamaica, Mexico, Peru and the United States) were also given the space to present their projects



Publications Developed through the Technical Cooperation Project between Cuba, Dominican Republic and Panama focused on strengthening the mental health component in primary health care

A series of very important documents has been developed within this project. The Dominican Republic has published an analysis of the mental health status that compares the mental health services of the three countries [Análisis de la Situación de la Salud Mental]; Panama has produced guidelines for the organization of social networks for the prevention of depression [Guía Técnica: Organización de Redes Sociales para la Prevención de la Depresión]; and, Cuba has published guidelines for the design and implementation of local programs to prevent and control suicidal behavior [Prevención y Control de la Conducta Suicida: Guía para el diseño e implementación de programas locales] and a second publication devoted to community centers for mental health [La Salud Mental en la Atención Primaria de Salud: Los Centros Comunitarios de Salud Mental] in Primary Health Care."

To obtain copies of any of these publications, please contact the documentation centers or Mental Health focal points at the PAHO Offices in the countries mentioned.



Links to other sources of information and activities

The World Fellowship for Schizophrenia & Allied Disorders, the Schizophrenia Society of Canada, and the Schizophrenia Society of Ontario will be hosting the 2007 International Conference "**Lighting the Path: Hope in Action.**" This conference aims to:

- Learn from international experts in Research, Psychosocial and Employment Initiatives
- Share new approaches to empowering families in the pre-conference and plenary sessions
- Participate in themes such as Recovery and its Challenges; Medical Perspectives; and Culture, Human Rights and Diversity
- Exchange ideas with international experts and delegates
- Discover Toronto, Canada's largest and most culturally diverse city

<http://conference.world-schizophrenia.org/>

The World Fellowship for Schizophrenia and Allied Disorders has issued its 9th informative bulletin in Spanish. Available at:

<http://espanol.world-schizophrenia.org/alianza/index.html>