



Bulletin of the Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Rehabilitation Unit

July 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"

WHO Global Alcohol Database

It is a useful tool for getting quick and recent information on alcohol production, consumption, related problems and policies from a country. It was created in 1997 by passive epidemiological surveillance and is today the most comprehensive source of country information available in the world. The database is regularly updated and can serve researchers, consultants, advisors and other collaborators working on alcohol related issues in the region. Several reports have been written with the information available in the database, and can be downloaded from the WHO website (www.who.int; [Health Topics-Alcohol Drinking- Publications](#)), and include the Global Status report on Alcohol (2), Alcohol and Young People and Alcohol Policies.

The following indicators are available on a country by country basis, although not all countries have information on all indicators: production and availability; levels of consumption; patterns of consumption; harms and consequences; economic aspects; alcohol control policies; resources for prevention and treatment; and indicators for comparative risk assessment analysis.

To consult the database, look at <http://www.who.int/globalatlas/default.asp>, [Related Websites](#). You will be able to choose a category (or indicator), select a topic within a category (e.g. within production and availability, you can look for supply or distribution of alcohol in a country). Then you select a geographical area (world, region), and/or countries you are interested in, and choose how you want the information presented (in a graph, table, e.g.), and the year of the information. It is a user-friendly system, and can provide very useful information for presentations and other needs.

PAHO is working with WHO to update information about alcohol policies in every country of the Region this year. Soon a questionnaire will be sent to all Focal Points in countries for completion.

Dr. Maristela Monteiro

Regional Adviser on Alcohol and Substance Abuse

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“V Postgrade Diploma in Community Mental Health and Psychiatry”

School of Public Health - Virtual Education Program [MEDICHI](#)
School of Medicine - University of Chile

More than a hundred professionals from all over Chile and from abroad are attending this course between June and December 2007. It was developed by the School of Public Health “Community Mental Health and Psychiatry Program”, with the collaboration of the Department of Mental Health of the Chilean Ministry of Health and PAHO.

With above two hundred and fifty trained professionals, this Diploma was created with the aim of making up for the lack of information about the Mental Health Care Community Model observed in the programs provided by the majority of the Chilean universities. The great interest showed by students is related to their community practice and their wish to systematize their experiences through a program that satisfies their needs. The contents include: a detailed study of principles and orientation of the Community Model; a deep analysis of the subject of Plans and Programs; a revision of the application of the Model when working with specific problems such as: psychosis, depression, alcohol and drug dependence and attention deficit disorder in children; a reflection about the challenges of working in multiprofessional teams and a thorough evaluation for the improvement of interventions.

An “International Community and Psychiatry Mental Health Workshop” will be held within the framework of the Diploma Course between November 5th and 9th. Professionals from Chile and from abroad will be participating in the workshop: Dr. José Miguel Caldas De Almeida, from Portugal and Dr Analía Broide, from Argentina. On this occasion, apart from the workshops on cases provided by students, attendants will deal with subjects such as Intercultural Mental Health and the Rehabilitation and Social Insertion of people who suffer from mental illnesses.

The National Network of Psychiatry and Mental Health of Mexico's Workshop

San Cristóbal de las Casas -Chiapas- May 24 -25.

It was organized by the “Psychiatric Assistance Services” of the Department of Health of Mexico, with the aim of analyzing and agreeing on an operating model for the new specialized medical units (UNEMES) dedicated to the field of Mental Health. Fifty units will be started all over the country, in two stages, during 2007.

Representatives from the first nineteen states initiating this process attended the workshop, as well as a delegation of the Republic's associative movement of users and relatives. Through their presentations, the lecturers, coming from fields such as policy making and administration, process design, epidemiologic research, quality control and evaluation, contributed to the consolidation of these new structures. PAHO'S representative, Dr Lamy, praised the effort of these processes and offered the technical support of the organization. Taking the opportunity of the invitation the states of Chiapas, Colima and Baja California Sur expressed their wish to receive PAHO'S technical support in order to start the assessment of the current situation of their mental health services.

Preventing Suicide: a resource series on WHO's WEBSITE
http://www.who.int/mental_health/resources/suicide/en/index.html

For general physicians, media professionals, teachers and school staff, health care workers, counselors, prison officers and how to start a survivors group, among others.



www.psiquiatriasur.cl
(In Spanish only)



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<http://www.bireme.br/>

Designation of the Mental Health Subregional Advisor for the English Speaking

The Unit of Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Rehabilitation is pleased to announce the appointment of Devora Kestel as the Mental Health Subregional Advisor for the English Speaking Caribbean Countries, effective 2-July- 2007.

Dévora Kestel is Argentinean, where she graduated in Psychology in 1989 (Universidad Nacional de La Plata). Soon after finishing her studies she moved to Italy (Trieste), where she has worked for almost 10 years in the mental health field. In 2000 she joined WHO/EURO initially as a Mental Health Consultant (representing the Trieste WHO Collaborating Centre) and soon after as a mental health officer in the WHO office in Kosovo. In 2001 Dévora moved to Albania, holding the same position of mental health officer. In February 2006 she was designated as Acting WHO Representative in Albania, position that she held until end of May 2007, date which she resigned in order to join PAHO. She is currently completing her MSc in Public Health at the London University.

She is located in the office of Caribbean Program Coordination (CPC) in Barbados.