

REDUCING STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION AGAINST OLDER PEOPLE WITH MENTAL DISORDERS

A Technical Consensus Statement

This document is a technical consensus statement jointly produced by the Old Age Psychiatry section of the World Psychiatric Association and the World Health Organization, with the collaboration of several NGOs and the participation of experts from different Regions.

It is intended to be a tool for (i) promoting debate at all levels on the stigmatisation of older people with mental disorders; (ii) outlining the nature, causes and consequences of this stigmatisation; and (iii) promoting and suggesting policies, programmes and actions to combat this stigmatisation.

KEY WORDS: old age psychiatry / psychogeriatrics / elderly people / stigma / discrimination / mental health / mental health care.

WHO - WPA

Geneva

2002

© World Health Organization and World Psychiatric Association 2002

This document is not a formal publication of the World Health Organization and all rights are reserved by the Organization. The document may, however, be freely reviewed, abstracted, reproduced or translated, in part or in whole, but not for sale or for use in conjunction with commercial purposes.

STIGMA, DISCRIMINATION AND MENTAL DISORDERS IN OLD PEOPLE

Both WHO and WPA have recognized that the stigma and discrimination attached to mental disorders are strongly associated with suffering, disability and economic losses. Recent social, economic and demographic changes have brought a series of challenges to the elderly, which jeopardize their role in society. Older people with mental disorders therefore carry a double burden which merits special attention. The technical consensus statement here presented (i) highlights the nature, causes and consequences of this stigmatization, and (ii) promotes and suggests policies, programmes and action to combat it.

As was the case with previous technical consensus statements on psychiatry of the elderly, this one was produced in a collaborative, multidisciplinary way, involving the following organizations relevant to this topic in addition to the World Psychiatric Association and the World Health Organization: Alzheimer's Disease International, International Association of Gerontology, International Council of Nurses, International Federation of Social Workers, International Psychogeriatric Association, International Union of Psychological Science, World Association for Psychosocial Rehabilitation, World Federation for Mental Health and the World Federation of Occupational Therapists.

We are profoundly indebted to all these organizations and their representatives (see List of Participants in Annex I) who generously contributed their ideas and time to produce this technical statement. Our gratitude is also extended to the Rapporteurs, Professor James Lindesay and Professor Cornelius Katona, who put together all the ideas presented at the meeting and the comments suggested during the extensive consultation process, and to the Chair, Dr Nori Graham who, in skilfully and gracefully conducted the sessions of the meeting. Last, but not least, our appreciation goes to the Service Universitaire de Psychogériatrie of the University of Lausanne, and to Dr Carlos A. de Mendonça Lima, Director of the WHO Collaborating Centre for

Research and Training in Old Age Psychiatry at that University, for having initiated and organized the meeting.

We are confident that readers of this statement will find it useful in combatting the stigma and discrimination attached to older people with mental disorders and thereby improving their quality of life.

Benedetto Saraceno
Director, Dept. of Mental Health and Substance Dependence
World Health Organization

BACKGROUND

This Technical Consensus Statement is dedicated to the esteemed memory of Jean Wertheimer. In the tradition he established as Chairman of the World Psychiatric Association Section of Old Age Psychiatry, the members of his department – Drs. de Mendonça Lima, Gaillard and Camus, undertook to organize a Consensus Meeting to produce this, the Section's Fourth Technical Consensus Statement. The Consensus Group, representing many organizations, is to be congratulated for producing such a succinct, relevant and practical document.

The destigmatization of people with mental disorders is central to the current agenda of action within the WPA. Its Section of Old Age Psychiatry is proud to be involved in the production of this document.

It is hoped that, through its dissemination within the professions, governments, NGOs, the WHO affiliated bodies and member societies of WPA, this Technical Consensus Statement will contribute substantially to the process of destigmatization.

We encourage all those who read this Technical Consensus Statement to engage actively in reducing stigma and discrimination against older people with mental disorders in order to enable them to enjoy a better quality of life.

Edmond Chiu, A.M.

Chairman

WPA Section of Old Age Psychiatry

FOREWORD

This fourth consensus statement is a contribution to the World Health Day and Report 2001. WHO has chosen Mental Health as theme for the WHD 2001, for the second time since 1950. The slogan for this day - Stop exclusion, Dare to care - summarises the main message that WHO wanted to spread all around the world: *there is no justification for excluding people with a mental illness or brain disorder from our communities*

Dr Gro Harlem Brundtland, Director-General of WHO, wrote in the World Health Report: *"Many of us still shy away from, or feign ignorance of such individuals as if we do not dare to understand and care"*.

As she reminded us, 2001 was also the tenth anniversary of the adoption in 1991 by the United Nations General Assembly of the Rights of the mentally ill to protection and care. Some of the principles stated by this resolution are:

- *there shall be no discrimination on the grounds of mental illness as far as possible;*
- *every patient shall have the right to be treated and cared for in his or her own community;*
- *every patient shall have the right to be treated in the least restrictive environment, with the least restrictive or intrusive treatment.*

What about the respect of these principles for old persons with mental disorders? When we consider that a policy for mental health is absent in 40% of member countries of the United Nations and that care for old persons is not considered as a priority in the majority of countries in the world, we can say that there is as yet no positive answer to this question.

Mental disorders in old age are common, they are a source of massive burden and represent important costs for societies. This will increase dramatically with the ageing of populations. In this context, stigma remains a major obstacle to ensuring access to good care for older people with mental disorders.

The United States Surgeon General's Report on Mental Health published in 1999 described the impact of stigma as follows: *"Stigma erodes confidence that mental disorders are valid, treatable health conditions. It leads people to avoid socialising, employing or working with, or renting to or living near persons who have a mental disorder. Stigma deters the public from waiting to pay for care and, thus, reduces consumers' access to resources and opportunities for treatment and social services. A consequent inability or failure to obtain treatment reinforces destructive patterns of low self-esteem, isolation, and hopelessness. Stigma tragically deprives people of their dignity and interferes with their full participation in society."*

All these statements are valid for old age psychiatry. That is why the efforts of WHO and WPA to realise consensus meetings and statements in this discipline are so important. They provide a basis for further developments and constitute important reference materials for governments, policy makers, consumers' associations, families and patients. I hope that this Technical Consensus Statement can contribute to reducing the suffering of old persons with mental disorders throughout the world.

Dr Carlos Augusto de Mendonça Lima
Director, WHO Collaborating Centre for
Old Age Psychiatry
University of Lausanne

REDUCING STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION AGAINST OLDER PEOPLE WITH MENTAL DISORDERS A Technical Consensus Statement

The World Health Organization and The World Psychiatric Association have produced three Technical Consensus Statements on the scope of old age psychiatry¹⁻³. These describe:

- the specialty of old age psychiatry;
- the organization of services in old age psychiatry;
- education in old age psychiatry.

The aim of this fourth Technical Consensus Statement is to provide a practical tool to assist in the reduction of the stigmatisation of older people with mental disorders. Its objectives are to:

- promote debate at all levels on the stigmatisation of older people with mental disorders;
- outline the nature, causes and consequences of this stigmatisation;
- promote and suggest policies, programmes and actions to combat this stigmatisation.

The audiences for this document are governments, professionals, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the media, families, individual sufferers, the general public - anyone who is in a position to help reduce

预览已结束，完整报告链接和二维码如下：

https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5_30346

