



**United Nations High Level Meeting Review
Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases
10 - 11 July 2014 - New York, USA**

Integrating Mental Health into Non-Communicable Diseases

We, the NGO Committee on Mental Health (New York) Affiliated with the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (CoNGO) and the NGO Forum for Health (Geneva) jointly support the integration of the Global NCD Action Plan and the WHO Comprehensive Mental Health Action Plan and efforts to ensure its implementation at all levels.

The importance of the inclusion of mental health in the NCD agenda has been highlighted in *The Brazzaville Declaration on Non-communicable Diseases Prevention and Control in the WHO African Region* of 6 April 2011 with its explicit inclusion of mental disorders in the NCD agenda. In addition, the *Moscow Declaration of the First Global Ministerial Conference on Healthy Lifestyles and Non-communicable Disease Control* of 28-29 April 2011 recognized mental disorders as NCDs that “significantly contribute to the global disease burden”.

Reduction of the burden of disease cannot occur without the integration of mental health services into healthcare. Mental health disorders such as depression are both risk factors for and consequences of the four NCDs. For example, heart disease is the number one killer of women. Recent research has shown that women ages 55 and younger, who are depressed, were significantly more likely to die of heart disease, or suffer a negative cardiovascular event. In addition, depression and lifestyle risks, together, are also strong determinants of Alzheimer's disease, one of the most costly/burdensome diseases, in addition to the other four NCDs.

WHO projects depression to be the number two burden of disease by 2020 and the number one burden of disease by 2030, surpassing the other four NCDs. In addition, depression may exist concurrently with other mental health issues such as anxiety and post traumatic stress. **Therefore, it is imperative that mental health be included as an additional major goal in the 2014 NCDs High Level Meeting outcome document.**

Furthermore, the four NCDs of heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and respiratory diseases are addressed in the WHO Global NCD Action Plan, while another, mental disorders, is addressed in the WHO Mental Health Action Plan. **Therefore, the integration of the WHO Global NCD Action Plan and the WHO Comprehensive Mental Health Action Plan would make more effective use of funding and maximize service provision on the regional, national, and global levels through the primary care sectors.** This integration would also facilitate access for all people and lead toward universal health coverage, which is a fundamental instrument for the prevention and control of NCDs and is integral to the achievement of sustainable development.

Margaret Chan, the Director General of WHO, assured the global health community during the UNGA Discussions on NCDs in 2011, that all possible effort would be made to ensure that there is meaningful communication between those involved in the implementation processes of both the Global NCD Action Plan and the Global Mental Health Action Plan, so as to ensure integration of funding and service provision. It is time to address this unfinished business.

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