

NO HEALTH WITHOUT MENTAL HEALTH: WHAT IT MEANS IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

The event "Psychiatry in the Contemporary World: No Health without Mental Health" highlights a critical truth: mental health is an inseparable and essential component of overall well-being. For too long, it has been marginalized by stigma and misunderstanding, leading to immense suffering and limited access to care.

Science now unequivocally demonstrates the profound link between mind and body. Chronic stress influences physical health, while physical ailments affect mental well-being. This interconnectedness demands a holistic approach to health. We also increasingly recognize the vital role of lifestyle factors, particularly physical activity, as a powerful tool for both physical and mental prevention and recovery.

Despite growing awareness, challenges persist, including persistent stigma, unequal access to services, and fragmented healthcare systems. Modern pressures like hyper-connectivity and global crises exacerbate these issues, contributing to rising levels of anxiety and depression.

Contemporary psychiatry's role is more vital than ever. Beyond diagnosis and treatment, it must promote mental health, resilience, and well-being. This requires greater collaboration across medical disciplines and increased community involvement. Critically, psychiatry must lead de-stigmatization efforts through public education and open dialogue. Strategic collaboration with journalists and media professionals is essential to shape public perception and disseminate accurate information, dismantling misconceptions and fostering empathy.

This event serves as a crucial platform to collectively seek solutions, share best practices, and build partnerships. It is a call to action for all stakeholders to prioritize mental health universally. By recognizing that mental health is the foundation of all health, we can foster healthier, more resilient, and compassionate societies. It is time to break the remaining taboos.

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WHAT'S NEW IN PSYCHIATRY IN 2024-2025

While our society is in a particular period (wars, rise of the far right, economic crisis, artificial intelligence), have these subjects been investigated by psychiatry since our Lisbon congress and what has psychiatry been interested in in general?

New therapeutic approaches

Iloperidone for Bipolar I Disorder. The FDA has approved iloperidone for the treatment of manic or mixed episodes in adults with bipolar I disorder. Clinical trials have shown efficacy that offers a new therapeutic option or even more personalized and potentially more effective care (Torres et al. 2024).

MDMA-Assisted Therapy for PTSD. MDMA-assisted therapy for the treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) also appears to be a step forward. The FDA has made it possible to set up theoretically accessible and effective treatment protocols (Wolfgang et al. 2025) that combine the use of MDMA with psychotherapy sessions. While this seems to be a novelty, the use of molecules used by drug addicts seems to be multiplying (esketamine, psilocybin, cannabinoids), which raises epistemological questions that have not yet been addressed.

Psychotherapy for Psychoses. Quite unexpectedly, there has been a renewed interest in psychotherapy for psychoses in Europe. In Switzerland, for example, following the observation of gaps in the care offered to these patients, a psychotherapy manual and specific training have been put in place (Conus 2024).

Technological innovations

Improved detection methods. Youth suicide prevention and technological investment in risk detection and reduction are certainly a major issue (Rukadikar & Khandelwal 2024). The innovations aim to enable faster identification of warning signs, facilitating early interventions. Detection tools include mobile apps, artificial intelligence algorithms, and telemedicine platforms.

Virtual Reality Technologies. The use of virtual reality (VR) in psychiatry has grown in popularity. Immersive therapies using VR are now being used to treat disorders such as phobias, anxiety, and PTSD (Zeka et al. 2025).

Mental Health Policies

Commission for youth mental health. In the wake of WHO's findings of shortcomings in the care of young people, the Lancet Psychiatry (The Lancet 2024) launched a commission to better understand the deterioration of young

people's mental health and offer appropriate care. The commission's work includes epidemiological studies, consultations with experts and recommendations for public health policies.

New health policies. In the aftermath of COVID, the European Union (EU 2024) is promoting new mental health policies in the hope of reducing waiting lists and improving access to care. In addition to financial incentives for doctors and psychologists, the focus is on continuing education programmes and collaborations between the various mental health actors.

Studies and research

Impact of childhood adversities. Several studies have explored the effects of childhood adversities on the mental health and cognitive development of young people (UNICEF 2024). The results highlighted the importance of early interventions to mitigate the negative impacts of these experiences. The researchers also identified resilience factors and proposed intervention strategies to help children and promote their well-being.

Frequency of psychiatric follow-ups. Other studies have also examined how the frequency of psychiatric follow-ups influences patients' clinical outcomes and wait times for consultations. Findings suggest that more frequent follow-ups may improve clinical outcomes and reduce wait times (Manderson et al. 2025).

"New therapies" for mood disorders. In 2024, the use of transcranial magnetic stimulation (Yang et al. 2024) continued to occupy a prominent place in the centers of interest of psychiatry as an alternative to drug treatments.

Conclusion

The progress in psychiatry since our Lisbon congress testifies to a commitment to improving care. The progress made this year shows not only the importance of collaboration between researchers and clinicians, but also and above all the importance of policymakers in these times of economic crisis in promoting mental health policies. On the other hand, while there are publications about wars (Shorfa & Bashir 2024) and the rise of the far right (De Rosa et al. 2024), they remain in the minority. The economic and social crisis is largely addressed in our congress directly (in particular by the question of loneliness) and indirectly.

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