October, 2019

Helping the Helpers: 50 Resources for Humanitarian Workers

BluePrint Group Updates

Global Fund to fight HIV, TB and Malaria Replenishment Conference

Every mind matters

SYM Update

WHO Mental Health forum

Caring for the Caregiving Meeting

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Global Moments

Mental Health at the UN High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage

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Every mind matters
The BluePrint Group is a global joint advocacy, communications and learning coalition comprising of over 300 representatives of governments, international organisations, NGOs, academia and the private sector. The group was formed to encourage greater global collaboration on mental health advocacy, communications and learning, and to enable anyone with a professional interest in mental health and/or in health policy to have a means to link up with others who share this interest.

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BluePrint Group Updates

The BluePrint Group now has over 300 members! Welcome to new members including representatives from WHO, Gates Foundation, ICRC, UNAIDS, Plan UK, Access to Medicine Foundation, Waves for Change and Amref. Anyone can sign up to the group via this link. To connect with BluePrint Group members please do join the BluePrint Group slack workspace and use the BluePrint Group google drive.

BluePrint Group Calls
The September BluePrint Group call notes are available here. Thanks to Zeinab Hijazi and her team at UNICEF for hosting us at their office! If you would like to contribute an item to the call agenda please email amy@unitedgmh.org.

The October call will be held as a webinar, which can be accessed through your computer HERE or by using the dial in details in this document. The webinar ID is 215-580-291

Details of the next few months of calls are available below:

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The UN High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage (HLM UHC) took place during the UN General Assembly on Monday 23 September at the UN in New York City. Following the acknowledgment last year that the world was off track to meet the sustainable development goal of universal health coverage a HLM UHC is being convened for governments and other stakeholders to discuss this issue and commit to getting the world back on track. Mental health has typically been left out of UHC discussions and national planning, and so significant advocacy efforts have been undertaken by the global mental health community, including BluePrint Group members, to ensure that mental health is included in the discussions and commitments made.

**Political Declaration**

The UN political declaration on Universal Health Coverage was officially adopted by member states during the meeting and includes strong mental health language. The declaration, “reaffirms the right of every human being to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, without distinction of any kind.” As well as reaffirming the right to good physical AND mental health the declaration makes specific commitments to improving mental health system, in particular through agreeing to the declaration governments are committing to:

“Implement measures to promote and improve mental health and well-being by developing comprehensive and human rights-based services for the prevention, including suicide prevention, as well as treatment for people living with mental health conditions and neurological or neurodevelopmental disorders, as an essential part of integrated health-care delivery”
**Mentions of mental health in statements**

At the HLM UHC, 13 member states, 2 multilaterals and the UN Secretary General mentioned mental health in their statements. These were:

- **Secretary General:** “Mental health conditions cause enormous anguish to individuals and their loved ones, they have been neglected and stigmatised for too long, this injustice must stop”.
- **European Union** stated its commitment to “promoting and protecting the highest attainable level of physical and mental health”.
- **Argentina** mentioned that they have historically not done enough on mental health.
- **Australia:** “As we grapple with the challenges of an ageing population, rising rates of non-communicable diseases and mental health, investing in prevention is fundamental”.
- **Bangladesh:** “We had also promised to reduce premature mortality from non-communicable diseases by one third through prevention and treatment as well as to promote mental health and well-being by 2030”.
- **Belgium:** “We strongly welcome the recognition of the integration of mental health, an integral part of UHC systems and dialogue and its parity with physical health. Belgium will continue to advocate for progress on mental health both nationally and internationally”.
- **Finland:** “To conclude, determinants and risk factors of health and mental health are governed by all sectors of our societies. The Sustainable Development Agenda gives us the framework to promote this approach on a global scale”.
- **Ireland:** “We’ve made considerable strides in modernising our mental health system, and we were one of the first countries to put in place a whole of government suicide prevention strategy”.
- **Netherlands** stated that mental health is one of their four domestic priorities for health and that “mental health services and PSS are as important as physical health, especially in crisis situations”.
- **New Zealand:** “We’ve also made changes to improve access and choice in primary mental health care, an important component of universal health coverage. Our investment in mental health and addiction has been scaled up in response to recommendations from our Inquiry into Mental Health and Addiction that charts a new direction for mental health and addiction in New Zealand. This significant and sustained investment over the next five years spans a range of portfolios, including health, education, corrections, justice and housing”.
- **Norway:** “The impression of Norway might be that we have already achieved UHC, but in the area of mental health and substance abuse issues, we are still coming up short. In Norway, people with severe mental health issues and drug addiction on average live 20 years shorter than everybody else. The main reason is that they do not get the same health care for diseases like cancer, diabetes and heart problems. That is one of the biggest and ugliest types of inequality in Norway, and will be our challenge in reaching UHC by 2030”.
- **Pakistan** announced that they are developing a “comprehensive national mental health policy”.
- **Russia:** “Russia’s national priorities in the sphere of both physical and mental health are pursued within the context of global healthcare efforts. Since 2012, in cooperation with both the WHO, UNDP, FAO, UNAIDS and other UN system organisations, the Russian Federation has been actively helping partner countries to combat communicable diseases and NCDs”.
- **South Africa:** “We value the importance of physical and mental health”.
- **St Kitts and Nevis** stated their commitment to mental health support.

It was a momentous day for mental health and health policy as a whole, and there is a lot to build upon. Now the focus must be on how to take this momentum to begin the work to ensure implementation at the country level.
Global Ministerial Summit on Mental Health

On 7th and 8th October, the Netherlands hosted the second annual Global Ministerial Mental Health Summit, at the Royal Tropical Institute in Amsterdam. Following the UK’s hosted summit last year, this year’s theme focused on the provision of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) in humanitarian response and emergency situations. Throughout the two days, the summit focused on the importance of MHPSS, and the need for Governments, policymakers and humanitarian response workers to work together to address the mental health needs of those affected by emergencies.

The Summit was packed with informative panels that included those with lived experience, ministers, donors, and experts. The summit ended with 24 countries and 10 international aid organisations agreeing to an Amsterdam Conference Declaration. The declaration is a guiding principle for humanitarian response plans, which endorsers commit to integrating and scaling up MHPSS in humanitarian responses, and agree to continue to draw attention to the mental health and psychosocial needs of people affected by emergencies. The summit concluded with a handover to France, who will be hosting the Summit on October 9th and 10th, 2020. You can find further information on the Summit on the Netherlands MFA website.

Helping the Helpers: 50 Resources for Humanitarian Workers

There are several resources available to support the wellbeing of humanitarian workers and their organisations, summarised in this list. For more information please email Dr. Kelly O’Donnell or Dr. Michele Lewis O’Donnell, Member Care Associates and WFMH Reps to the UN.

WHO Mental Health forum

On the 14th and 15th of October, WHO hosted the Mental Health Forum in Geneva on the theme of “Enhancing Country Action on Mental Health.” The sessions covered a range of topics including the mhGAP community toolkit, suicide prevention, Quality Rights initiative and the Minimum Services Package. The main sessions were recorded and are available on the WHO website.

Social Determinants of Mental Health conference

“Educating Health Professionals to Address the Social Determinants of Mental Health” is being run by the Global Forum on Innovation in Health Professional Education in Washington DC on 14th and 15th of November. More information can be found here, or you can email bjorg@thenetcommunity.org for further details, including a draft agenda.

Facebook’s New Selfie Filter to support It’s Ok To Talk

This year for World Mental Health Day, Facebook launched the Let’s Talk stickers on Messenger with 16 stickers aimed at encouraging mental health conversations. Each time a sticker is sent, Facebook will donate $1 to a group of mental health organisations up to $1 million USD.

Mental health friendly cities campaign

On World Mental Health Day 2019, citiesRISE launched #IRISE #weRISE – an activation to create a Mental Health Friendly Cities movement to support the life journey of people, with youth leading the way. #IRISE #weRISE begins a dialogue across youth and cities and creates a conversation around how we RISE for mental health.
Global Fund to fight HIV, TB and Malaria Replenishment Conference

On 9th and 10th of October, the Global Fund to fight HIV, TB and Malaria (The Global Fund) held their Replenishment Conference in Lyon. The Conference successful raised $14 billion for The Global Fund to spend over the next three year phase with all donors increasing their previous donations by over 15%. Although mental health was not formally on the agenda, United for Global Mental Health (UnitedGMH) attended and had a stand within the exhibition hall which attracted many senior figures within the global health and development world including The Global Financing Facility, The Global Fund Secretariat, and the UK Secretary of State for International Development, Alok Sharma.

On the main stage, mental health was discussed with heads of multilateral agencies such as Gunilla Carlsson, UNAIDS Executive Director highlighting the link between HIV and mental health conditions, and powerful lived experience advocates such Dr Zolelwia Sifumba from South Africa describing the pain of mental health conditions resulting from diagnosis and treatment of TB.

UnitedGMH is working with key allies from civil society and leading national governments to push for better integration of mental health services in HIV and TB interventions, founded on good policy and practice and with adequate finance. For more information please contact amy@unitedgmh.org

Speak Your Mind Updates

Speak Your Mind campaigners marked World Mental Health Day across the globe with a variety of activities including:

**Nigeria:** Campaigners in Nigeria planned 14 events throughout October including grassroots outreach such as stands in local markets to engage passers by in discussions about MH, as well as handing out information cards, and signposting to the support available from Mentally Aware Nigeria Initiative. There have also been lectures on mental health at local universities, symposiums and a beach meet-up in Lagos for young Nigerians to talk about MH and suicide prevention.

**India:** Both Indian campaign organisations Mariwala Health Initiative, and Sangath will be hosting speaking engagements on World Mental Health Day, with the Speak Your Mind 40 second call to action featuring highly in these activities. One of these speaking opportunities was at a conference organised by FICCI in India. Sangath partnered with TheWildcity, an online music magazine and community platform, and events company to curate mental health awareness information for the artist community in India. You can see the content here.

**UK:** Mind UK recorded a voice petition video which featured their CEO Paul Farmer calling on all UK government departments to prioritise mental health.

**Indonesia:** In Indonesia the SYM team have launched the social media accounts for their branch of the SYM campaign; HELLO. The HELLO campaign was developed in the Comic Relief capacity building workshop held in Bali workshop as a suicide prevention and awareness building campaign tapping into other organisations/institutions for people celebrating WMHD.
Caring for the Caregiving Meeting

On 16th November global mental health experts gathered on the fringe of the WHO Mental Health Forum to discuss caregiver mental health. The event ‘Caring for the Caregiving Mind Expert Convening: Exploring successful approaches to improve maternal and caregiver mental health for the benefit of young people’ was led by the Bernard van Leer Foundation and brought together 50 experts (many members of the BPG) from academia, governments, programming and advocacy. The group heard from successful mental health interventions in a range of settings, discussed different methods of scaling up projects and different perspectives on addressing caregiver mental health. The event provided an excellent space to exchange knowledge and experiences, and discuss how best to positively impact large numbers of caregivers mental health.

Every Mind Matters

Public Health England and the National Health Service UK launched a new mental health resource ‘Every Mind Matters,’ which aims to support people to look after their own mental health and support others. The platform was recently launched with a film directed by Richard Curtis, voiced by the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and the Duke and Duchess of Sussex.

Spotlight on: Mental Health Matters – A Healthy Workforce for a Better World.
UN System Workplace Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy

The UN has developed a five-year System-wide Workplace Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy with the objective of improving mental health and wellbeing for all UN personnel. This was launched in October 2018 by the Secretary General and has four key themes: welcoming and supporting staff who have experienced a mental health problem, taking steps to ensure the UN is a mentally healthy workplace, ensuring equitable access to quality psycho-social support and developing a sustainable funding model for the strategy.

A website has been released which is accessible to all HERE.

It contains information about:

- mental health and mental health conditions
- how to support colleagues and look after your own mental health
- information for managers and leaders about creating a mentally healthy workplace and supporting staff
- the UN System Workplace Mental Health Strategy

On World Mental Health Day (10 October 2019) a number of webinars were held which were recorded and will be made available on the website and will be accessible to the general public.

Therese Fitzpatrick, the Global Lead for the implementation of the strategy, says “this is an exciting and significant change management project to improve mental health across the UN System and increase the knowledge base globally for improving mental health within workplaces and communities across the globe”.

Therese can be contacted at mhs@un.org.au if you have any questions.