



International
Pharmaceutical
Students' Federation

European Regional Office

IPSF EuRO Regional Resolution on Mental Health

/IPSFEuRO

© IPSF EuRO 2020 | All rights reserved

IPSF



IPSF EuRO Regional Resolution on Mental Health - as approved during the 9th EuRA

The International Pharmaceutical Students' Federation (IPSF) European Regional Office and its Member Organizations,

Recalling the World Health Organization definition of health as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” that describes mental health as an integral part of health,

Noting with deep concern that mental health illnesses are usually not socially accepted as the case of other fields of the healthcare system and are commonly perceived by the patients as diseases that don't require serious attention,

Alarmed by the social stigma associated with mental health illnesses, including prejudice and misinformation, among patients and health care providers as well as citizens, in general. Social stigma led by poor education is a worrying factor of marginalization and causing fear to seek professional help, contributing to absent or late diagnosis and low therapeutic adherence,

Recognizing the massive social and economic impact of mental health illnesses, including early retirement, therapy costs and days absent from work,

Noting with regret that the pharmacist is currently not perceived as an actor within the mental health system, with a role usually including solely medical care at the counter,

Alarmed by the fact that 72% of IPSF EuRO Member Organisations have stated the current pharmacy education in their country is not providing students the necessary skills to address mental health. Inadequate pharmacy education prevents potential improvement of the role of the pharmacists on the topic,

Deeply concerned by health students being below the average in terms of their mental health. Pharmacy students are frequently affected by physical and mental overload leading to stress, depression, and burnout associated with their studies,

Observing the lack of solid and effective mental health services in contrast to the ever-increasing need for care and support. The inequality in access and distribution of healthcare professionals and mental health services and medicines is worrying,

Acknowledging the potential of pharmacists as highly accessible, approachable and evenly distributed throughout the territories and frequently the first sought healthcare professionals by patients in case of any medical problem,

Viewing with appreciation that pharmacists are in contact with patients more often than any other professional, creating a special relationship based on trust and confidence,



1. Emphasizes that pharmacists as the first and last health care professional in contact with the patient must play a vital role in the therapy of mental illnesses and supporting primary healthcare in the communities;
2. Affirms the importance of pharmacists raising awareness on mental health within the healthcare system and society, in general, to debunk myths and reduce the social stigma associated with mental health illnesses and reluctance to seek help from healthcare professionals;
3. Calls on the IPSF and its Member Organisations to organise initiatives to raise awareness on this topic and break the stigma around this topic as well as focusing on the younger population;
4. Proclaims pharmacists as an accessible healthcare professional, especially in rural areas where pharmacies serve as the point of contact with the health system, as an opportunity to provide the necessary support to those that visit the pharmacy more frequently than any other health care facility, by providing pharmaceutical counseling and frequently assessing patients' well-being;
5. Encourages pharmacists to provide pharmaceutical counseling, review the medication, and educate patients about the use, expected effect, potential side effects, and interactions of their medication. This will avoid self-medication and interruption of treatment, foster therapeutic optimization, and substitution when appropriate and increase therapeutic adherence and health outcomes;
6. Affirms the role of pharmacists in prevention, risk assessment and early detection of patients with undiagnosed mental health illnesses, by recognizing warning signs and if needed referring the person to the most appropriate level of care;
7. Reminds pharmacists can support ongoing treatment by detecting signs of non-compliance that can represent treatment interruption or crisis and that should be readily communicated with the doctors;
8. Notes that pharmacists should act in the best interest of the patient by engaging in the close follow-up of the patients in coordination with the doctors;
9. Takes note of the important role of pharmacists in reducing drug use, avoid abuse and misuse, and discontinuing treatments. Pharmacists are perfectly positioned to detect any signs of drug addiction and abuse;
10. Encourages pharmacists to counsel patients on general health promotion and lifestyle changes as non-pharmacological measures important in mental health;
11. Calls on the importance of Interprofessional Collaboration and multidisciplinary teams, empowered by effective education and understanding the role of the healthcare professions, to address the complexity of mental health and allow collaborative work;
12. Encourages proper communication between pharmacists and doctors, empowered by IT systems that allow sustainable connectivity between doctors, pharmacists and the different levels of care, while keeping privacy issues in mind;



13. Recognizes the important role of pharmacists as a medication specialist consultant in mental health care centers, psychiatric clinics and other levels of care;
14. Endorses the need to improve pharmacy education on mental health through effective implementation of training programs, including adequate practical components, training communication, and other soft-skills, and pharmaceutical counseling;
15. Reminds that improved education will empower pharmacists to have an expanded scientifically-driven role in the mental health system;
16. Emphasizes the importance of protecting and improving the mental health of students, namely decreasing stress and preventing burnouts. This should be achieved through easier access to health services and providing the necessary information and support to the students;
17. Draws the attention for the importance of guaranteeing equal access to safe, quality and effective medicines and healthcare services to all those suffering of any mental health condition;
18. Condemns the fact that there is still a significant lack in research, strategies, policies, and programs to prevent mental disorders, examining risk factors and establishing protective measures;
19. Calls on the IPSF and its Member Organisations to advocate to the relevant stakeholders for improved pharmacy education in regards to addressing mental health, the pharmacist role as well as the importance of continuous education of pharmacists on this topic;
20. Requests the IPSF and its Member Organisations to advocate for the importance of the role of pharmacists in Mental Health, increasing awareness in the society to strengthen the opinion and the trust on the pharmacists' role.