



The changing landscape of global mental health: COVID-19 and its impact

This year's Mental Health Forum¹ will take place online on 8 October. It will provide an opportunity for diverse stakeholders to get an overview of mental health aspects of COVID-19 and the challenges and opportunities it has brought to mental health, both globally and locally. COVID-19 has exposed the limitations of existing mental health systems and has made it clear that we cannot maintain the status quo.

The theme for this year's Mental Health Forum is the changing landscape of global mental health in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The theme reflects the urgent need for action on mental health as a result of COVID-19 pandemic. We will discuss: **Global and country-level actions by governments, civil society and academia to respond to mental, neurological and substance use needs during the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Advocates and policymakers across the globe showed that mental health can never be in the shadows and should be in the center of any emergency and post-emergency, recovery response. During the forum this year, we will review the progress in positioning mental health in COVID-19 response agenda and beyond. We will learn about ongoing and new initiatives and discuss ways to enhance action in countries.

We will also discuss a wide range of **COVID-19 Mental Health products and actions** developed and implemented by WHO and partners to support affected people.

We will discuss how WHO and inter-agency tools are supporting the implementation of mental health interventions in different age groups and across different settings, and how we can do better together.

The current pandemic has made evident that reliance on outdated mental health systems is no longer an option. Promising initiatives by countries and agencies have shown that it is feasible to make a difference through innovation during the most challenging times.

Even though we cannot meet in person for WHO's 12th annual mental health forum, this year's online forum, in abbreviated format, is a great opportunity to stay connected as one global mental health community to discuss, exchange knowledge and make together a global difference in the lives of the people we all serve.

For more information, please contact the Department of Mental Health and Substance Use by emailing mhForum@who.int to register and receive a copy of the weblink.

¹ The Mental Health Forum is an informal meeting among Member States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, including UN Agencies, development agencies, philanthropic foundations, research institutes, and WHO Collaborating Centres, for coordinated discussion on mental health