

A letter to the Editor. International initiatives focusing on training in the use of the ICD-11 chapter on mental disorders

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Dear Editor,

The ICD-11 chapter on mental disorders has now been finalized. The most important changes in this chapter with respect to the ICD-10, and the most significant differences from the DSM-5, have been described comprehensively [1]. In the process of development of the chapter, several contentious issues – such as the role of a dimensional component in the classification and the need of further characterizing the individual patient after a diagnosis has been made, in order to personalize management – have been widely debated [2–11].

Training of mental health professionals in the use of the ICD-11 chapter is now taking place worldwide, under the supervision of a WHO International Advisory Group led by G.M. Reed. Training courses have been conducted within the 18th and 19th World Congresses of Psychiatry (Mexico City, 2018; Lisbon, 2019) [12–14].

A training course with exclusive access to the members of the WHO Global Clinical Practice Network (<https://gcp.network>) has been recently set up by the WHO Collaborating Centre on Mental Health at the Columbia University, in collaboration with the WHO Department of Mental Health and Substance Use. The course consists of 15 online training units, each focusing on a different disorder grouping and taking from one to one and a half hours. Each unit provides a description of the relevant diagnostic grouping and the main innovations with respect to the ICD-10. Knowledge check questions are included to test the outcome of training. Participants have the opportunity to practice by applying diagnostic guidelines to clinical case examples. This training course is going to be available also in Spanish, and additional translations are planned.

The WHO Global Clinical Practice Network now includes more than 16,000 clinicians from 159 countries (51% psychiatrists, 30% psychologists; 40% from Europe, 25% from Western Pacific, 24% from the Americas, 5% from Southeast Asia, 3% from

Eastern Mediterranean, and 3% from Africa; 63% from high-income countries, 37% from middle – and low-income countries). All health professionals working in mental health or primary care are welcome to join the Network.

A comprehensive online training course has been co-organized by the Naples WHO Collaborating Centre on Research and Training in Mental Health and the European Psychiatric Association in April 2021. This 20-hr course, subdivided into four sessions, has been coordinated by G.M. Reed and M. Maj, and has covered schizophrenia and other primary psychotic disorders, disorders specifically associated with stress, mood disorders, anxiety and fear-related disorders, obsessive-compulsive and related disorders, feeding and eating disorders, personality disorders, disorders due to substance use, disorders due to addictive behaviors, and compulsive sexual behavior disorder. W. Gaebel, M. Cloitre, M. Maj, C.S. Kogan, P. Monteleone, M. Swales, J.B. Saunders, and N.A. Fineberg composed the Faculty.

A similar training course, co-organized by the World Psychiatric Association and the Global Mental Health Academy, will take place online from 8 to 29 November 2021 (see www.wpanet.org).

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