

Towards global mental health for all

A journey through consecutive Global Mental Health Summits



2018
London



2019
Amsterdam



2021
Paris



2022
Rome



2023
Buenos Aires

*Equality for
Mental Health*



**The Inaugural
Global
Ministerial
Mental Health
Summit**

London 2018

The United Kingdom (UK) hosted the Inaugural Global Ministerial Mental Health Summit in October 2018; the first, ever meeting of international ministers solely focussed on mental health. As the first ministerial event of its kind, the endeavour was to ensure that the summit showcased innovations from across the global south and north; that they were balanced across health and non-health settings; that rights-based approaches were considered on par with others and that experts-by-experience were central to the discussions.



Ministerial attendance photo with UK Secretary of State for Health (Matt Hancock) and the Summit Committee Chair (Professor Kendall, NHS National Clinical Director for Mental Health)

Core theme and aims

The theme chosen was '*Equality for Mental Health in the 21st Century*' and the overarching ambition was to inspire leaders to commit to real and lasting change to correct the historical imbalance in investment and response to mental health and to achieving real equality between mental and physical health. The theme also reflects the need to ensure that the approach to mental health, and equality, is fit for the 21st century: care can no longer only take place in institutions, technological advances need to be understood and embraced, and there needs to be consideration of asset-based approaches, not only looking to minimise the 'deficits' that people can experience.

The key aims of the 2018 were clear, they were to:

Build momentum on global mental health issues, such as tackling stigma and promoting access to evidence-based services.

Gain support for a global declaration committing to political leadership on mental health.

Create a legacy, with summits being held annually, driving forward global action.

Core achievements

Engagement

- Over **580 delegates** participated in person, officially representing **47 countries** from a range of geographic regions and of varying levels of economic development, and **16 international ministers** were in attendance.
- People with **lived experience co-produced every part of the Summit**; co-chairing each workstream.

- › Their **Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales** (in 2018 formally titled the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge) attended the Summit workshops and exhibition space.
- › **Seventeen exhibitors** including: Black Thrive; National Survivor User Network; International Committee of the Red Cross; International Medical Corps; Academy of Medical Sciences; McPin Foundation; Mental Health Innovation Network; Time to Change Global.
- › In the margins of the summit a number of side events took place: the UK Department for International Development hosted a **roundtable on mental health and psychosocial support for children in conflict** settings; a panel organised by the OECD on **children and young people in the digital age**; the premier of a mental health animation produced by Havas Lynx and Aardman; **UK Secretary of State for Health and Social Care launched the Time to Change Global Film "It's Time to Talk"** as part of their anti-stigma campaign.

Global commitment to political leadership on mental health

The centre-piece of the 2018 summit was the publication of [The Declaration on Achieving Equality for Mental Health](#) at the Ministers' meeting, held on the second day of the Summit which was also the 2018 World Mental Health Day. The Declaration makes a commitment to address mental health challenges at the global and local level, to further the improvement of mental health promotion, prevention, and service provision around the world.

Legacy

The inaugural Summit established a legacy and marked the commencement of a series of annual Global Ministerial Summits on Mental Health, hosted by countries across the globe. It has been a catalyst for increased interest and discussion about mental health in international arenas. For the first time, Governments are talking about mental health from a global perspective. Certainly, in the UK there has been an increase in bilateral meetings with other countries and a UK Ministerial delegation sent to visit Trieste and the WHO Collaborating Centre for Research and Training, to learn from the international example of the No Restraint System of Care.

Core formal outcomes

Global Declaration for Achieving Mental Health in the 21st Century



The Declaration on Achieving Equality for Mental Health set out a vision for addressing the key mental health challenges globally to tackle stigma and discrimination, increase mental health investment and improve access to services and better data and research. The declaration aligns with the policies articulated in the [World Health Organization \(WHO\) Mental Health Action Plan 2013-2020](#); builds on the [UN Human Rights Council Resolution](#) on the right of everyone to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health; promotes the implementation of the [UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#), for those that are party to it; recognises the integral role of good mental health and wellbeing in achieving [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#); supports the report of the [WHO Independent High-Level Commission on Noncommunicable Diseases](#); and upholds other resolutions and commitments relating to mental health.

Lancet Commission on Global Mental Health and Sustainable Development

The Summit hosted the launch of landmark [The Lancet Commission on Global Mental Health and Sustainable Development](#) which provides a blueprint for action on mental health to help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Drawing on research and lived experience from around the world, the Commission is the seminal synthesis of knowledge on global mental health, written to catalyse action.

Report and recommendations for Governments and policy makers

The Declaration was structured according to the six workstreams of the summit. With workstream topics carefully chosen to reflect a balance across health and non-health settings, aligning with the ethos of the summit: that **mental health and wellbeing is not only the responsibility of health care systems and professions, but it is also society's responsibility** and should be grounded in a rights-based approaches and with the full participation of people with mental health conditions and psychosocial disabilities in decision-making at all levels. Summit delegates convened in workstreams to hear about innovative approaches to mental health around the world and agree recommendations. Recommendations were presented to Ministers by workstream co-chairs. These recommendations can be viewed in the [Report of the 2018 Global Ministerial Mental Health Summit](#).

The workstream subject areas:

- › Children, young people and the 'now generation'
- › The economics of, and Investment in, mental health finance
- › Caring societies: creating the conditions for inclusion, prevention and wellbeing
- › Mental health services around the world
- › A just society: supporting societal shifts, tackling stigma and discrimination, creating inclusive societies
- › Research and the future of mental health

Progress on aims, recommendations and commitments since the Summit

The 2018 Global Ministerial Mental Health Summit is a step in a journey towards equality between mental and physical health. **Hosting the first summit was a reflection of the top priority the UK Government places on mental health**, having made a £1bn additional NHS investment to expand provision of mental healthcare in the 2016 strategy; the [Five Year Forward View for Mental Health](#). In line with Summit Recommendations, the UK Government made a renewed commitment to improve and widen access to care for children and adults needing mental health support and increased funding in mental health at a faster rate than the overall NHS budget. The 2019 [NHS Long Term Plan](#) **created a new, ringfenced local investment fund worth at least £2.3 billion extra per year** by 2023/24. Almost wholly focused on community mental health development aims to deliver the fastest expansion in mental health services in the NHS's history. This brings the English mental health system investment to an expected 13.6 billion per year in 2023/24, that is ~9% of the overall health budget for the NHS.

Ongoing work

The UK Government is committed to treat mental health with the same urgency as physical health. The NHS England Executive Board has reasserted the commitment to parity for mental health. Under the leadership of Professor Tim Kendall, NHS England will introduce a new, progressive community-based model for mental health which supports human rights, is delivered locally and focuses on prevention and early intervention. This is consistent with the WHO models for the future of mental health.



Prof Kendall, National Clinical Director for Mental Health, writing message on the interactive board in exhibition

Mind the Mind Now



**Mental
Health and
Psychosocial
Support in crisis
situations**

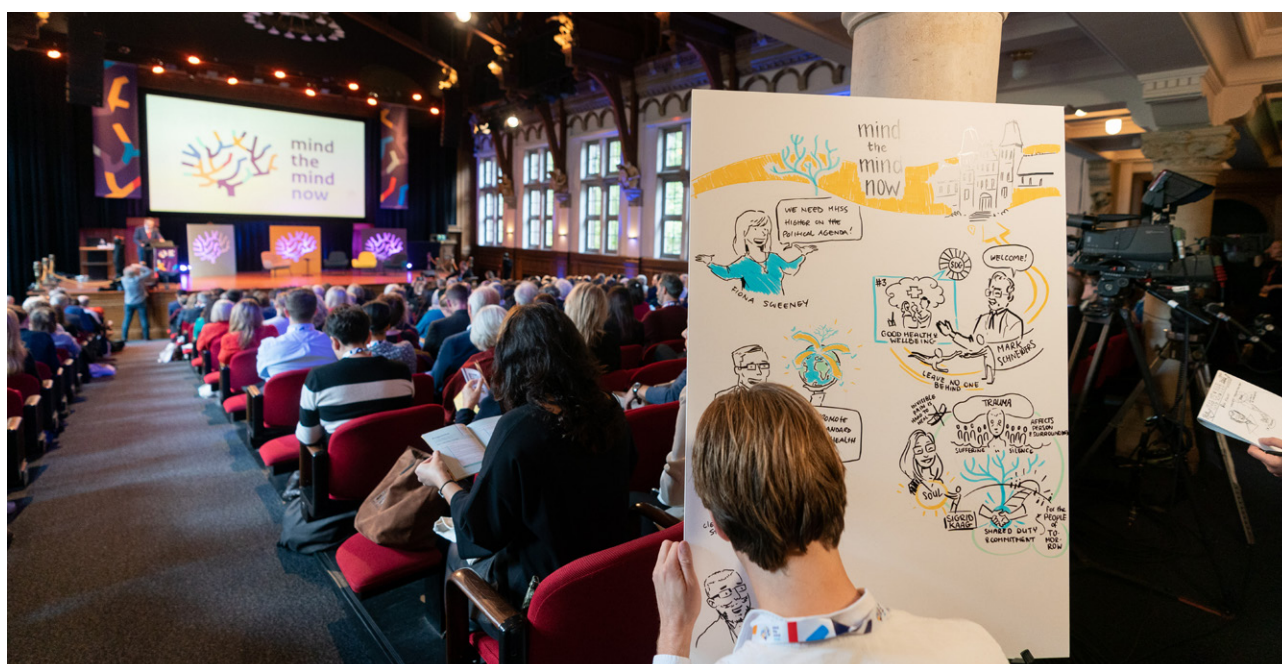
Amsterdam 2019

The second Global Mental Health Summit was hosted by the Netherlands and organized with a variety of stakeholders, among whom [WHO](#). Many of these had for years promoted structural attention for mental health and psychosocial wellbeing in emergencies¹. This Summit advanced political recognition globally of the need for Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) as an integral part of any crisis response in humanitarian emergencies and protracted crises. Do watch the video- impression of the Summit, which you can find on the frontpage [here](#).



MHPSS recognized as a cross cutting issue relevant in all emergencies

[Recommendations](#) were prepared by groups of global and in-country experts as well as persons with lived experience, endorsed through [The Amsterdam Declaration](#). Participating countries and organizations pronounced commitments on implementation of the outcomes of the Summit. And indeed quite a number of achievements have been registered since then.



Graphic reports were made of the plenary performances and discussions

Progress since the Summit

The outcomes of the Amsterdam Summit were further strengthened by the [Decision](#) of December 5th 2019 of the Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) to treat MHPSS as a cross-cutting issue that has relevance within among others health, protection, nutrition and education sectors in all emergencies. And indeed by the [Policy](#) and [Resolution](#) on the integration of MHPSS in emergency response adopted by the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross Red Crescent in December 2019. The Red Cross Red Crescent Movement proceeded to develop a [Roadmap](#) on the integration of MHPSS in emergency response and is regularly implementing [surveys](#) on progress thereof.

MHPSS as a core part of the COVID 19 response

When quickly after these 2019 events COVID19 developed, demand multiplied for operational advice on how to respond to the mental health consequences of emergencies – in this case of the pandemic and its mitigation, including physical distancing and lockdowns. The [IASC MHPSS Reference Group](#) developed a magnitude of materials, among which probably the most amazing the booklets developed for children, [My Hero is you](#). The extent to which materials like these were quickly translated into a large number of languages speaks to the need for supportive materials and to the increased willingness to break stigma and address mental and psychosocial needs.

¹ Do visit for example [IASC MHPSS Reference Group](#); [IFRC Psychosocial Centre](#); [MHPSS.net](#)

Increased inclusion of MHPSS in emergency appeals and in humanitarian and refugee response plans

The increased global recognition of its importance materialized in the further inclusion of MHPSS in Global Humanitarian Appeals, such as the Global Humanitarian Response Plan COVID-19, and, more recently, Emergency Appeals for humanitarian action in Ukraine and neighboring countries since the full scale invasion of February 2022, and in Türkiye and Syria after the earthquakes of early 2023. The inclusion of MHPSS in appeals increases programming space and budget available for MHPSS as part of the emergency response. And the need for MHPSS-inclusive approaches is indeed expressed by people and communities affected by emergencies, as illustrated in this survey of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement on its COVID-19 response: "[The greatest need was to be listened to](#)".

The need to include MHPSS in emergency response has now also been reconfirmed in global resolutions on the [Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations](#). Also, MHPSS was more structurally included in general humanitarian and coordination guidance materials, such as the [Handbook for the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator](#), that now includes MHPSS as a subject which requires a leadership role of Resident and Humanitarian Coordinators. Furthermore, [guidance on how to coordinate MHPSS](#) was developed.

Other expressions of increased attention for mental health and psychosocial wellbeing can be found in the UNICEF [2021 State of the World's Children 2021 Report](#), On my Mind: Promoting, Protecting and Caring for Children's Mental Health, as well as in the October 2022 [Conclusion nr. 116](#) of the Executive Committee of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' Programme which deals specifically with MHPSS for forcibly displaced and stateless people, or in the [United Nations General Assembly Resolution on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support](#) of Summer 2023.



And operations?

In preparation for the 3rd GMHS, in Paris, this [inventory](#) was made of operational progress on Amsterdam recommendations.

The level to which MHPSS has become a subject which gets attention from national and local authorities as well as from both funding and implementing organizations, can be seen for example when looking at [this mapping](#) of MHPSS-initiatives in Ukraine. The quantity of activities in this field is encouraging; it also underlines the need for coordination and quality support.



In-depth sessions served to prepare universal, practicable recommendations

The number of MHPSS Technical Working Groups, which operate in emergencies to coordinate quality MHPSS provided, has grown significantly, from 23 to 50. And from 2020 through 2023, under the [MHPSS Rapid Deployment Mechanism](#), 48 MHPSS experts were seconded to work with MHPSS technical working groups in different crises, accompanied by the IASC MHPSS Reference Group.

Since 2019, WHO with UNICEF and other partners developed an online tool, the intersectoral [MHPSS Minimum Services Package](#) of minimum MHPSS activities to be delivered in humanitarian emergencies. In 2022, the MSP has been tested in five humanitarian settings: Colombia, Iraq, Nigeria, South Sudan and Ukraine. It has now been endorsed by IASC. Educational videos and a recently launched helpdesk help organizations to make optimal use of the MSP and its costing tool. A report from the five demonstration countries, with lessons learned and feedback which helped finalize the MSP, is available on the MSP website². As of September 2023, the MSP online platform has been accessed by 34,000 individuals from 156 different countries.

² The "MSP Field demonstration Lessons Learned Report" can be downloaded at the bottom of this website: <https://www.mhpssmsp.org/en/downloads>

Remaining challenges and ongoing work



Challenges remain.
Some core issues to work on @Buenos Aires and beyond:

Capacity & quality

With increased attention for and growing willingness to discuss and address mental and psychosocial needs and with ever growing numbers of people affected by emergencies and protracted crises, the need to scale up capacities and develop and roll-out effective, smart and qualitative ways to prevent and address mental and psychosocial issues in emergencies remains of utmost importance.

The development of additional elements for the MHPSS Minimum Services Package, among which a multi-sectoral MHPSS assessment toolkit and capacity building through training modules and help desk support, is an answer. The ongoing provision of Psychological First Aid training to Red Cross Red Crescent staff and volunteers by the Movement is another. The development of an MHPSS Diploma Course by the American University of Beirut, Save the Children and ILO, under the PROSPECTS Opportunity Fund, is an example of a longer-term step towards a more systematized training of new experts in the MENA-region. More examples exist.

How to ensure these all reinforce each other and jointly help to substantially strengthen global ability to address mental health and psychosocial needs during emergencies?

Coordination

With increased demand and attention for MHPSS, and with increasing numbers of initiatives that do include MHPSS, cross-sectoral coordination and cooperation becomes ever more important. The role of MHPSS Technical Working Groups, the IASC MHPSS Reference Group, the IFRC Psychosocial Centre and mechanisms to increase exchange of knowledge and expertise between humanitarian, development and peacebuilding actors, remains crucial as well. As does the role of national and local governments, actors and persons with lived experience, as well as of international donor organizations.

How to ensure that with increasing numbers of MHPSS-inclusive initiatives in emergencies, quality support is provided in a comprehensive, effective and efficient way, covering gaps and avoiding unnecessary replication?

Preparedness and prevention

With ever increasing numbers of persons affected by emergencies, we need to be prepared for mental health and psychosocial needs in emergencies if we want to avoid those needs growing worse. MHPSS-preparedness is key, and experience in countries and regions confronted with compounding crises shows it is feasible and pays off.

What does MHPSS-preparedness consist of? How to enable and organize this?



Come and visit Workshop 9 @5th GMHS on

MHPSS IN EMERGENCIES

to join the discussions on this topic!

*Mind Our Rights,
Now!*



**Sommet mondial
sur la santé
mentale
Paris 2021**

The Paris summit “Mind Our Rights, Now!” was co-organized by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry for Europe and Foreign affairs and was held on October 5 and 6, 2021 at the Convention Center of the Ministry Foreign Affairs in Paris.



Plenary session in Paris on “Dialogue between global health and rights”

The summit has been a milestone in the mobilisation for rights in mental health and quality care systems that respect human rights. This theme was particularly relevant in the context of populations hard hit by the pandemic. And it still is. It has brought together ministers of health, international organisations, civil society actors, people with lived experience family carers, professionals, experts, opinion leaders, foundations and academic institutions (110 speakers from 38 countries, 200 people on site, and more than 2000 online from more than 100 countries, 20 Ministers or official country delegations)

The ambition was to promote rights in mental health as a powerful lever to change policies and care organisations towards better access and quality provision. To meet this challenge, the speakers presented concrete actions organized around two main themes: (i) lessons learned from the Covid-19 crisis and the impact for mental health within global health and (ii) Innovative and rights-based practices in mental health.



The place of mental health in global health during and after the covid crisis

The immediate and future consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health and the exacerbation of vulnerabilities were addressed. The participants also took stock of the challenges, opportunities and emergencies, actions of international organisations (WHO, UN, UNICEF, Global Fund, OECD) and the mobilisation of the international community to place mental health in all fields of global health. The output was a plea to make mental health a lever for success in strengthening health systems, achieving universal health coverage and international health security in the long term.



Innovative and rights-based practices in mental health

The question of Rights in Mental Health is now raised all over the world, and is in line with an international momentum. Throughout the world, there are many experiences that demonstrate the feasibility of innovative practices in psychiatry and mental health, which make it possible to reach the extremely high standards set by international texts and conventions. Initiatives, testimonies and local and international experiences were presented, carried out by professionals, civil society representatives and political decision-makers, in particular through legislative changes. A strong focus was made on sharing experiences.

The program and live stream of all sessions are available in English and in French at:

<https://sante.gouv.fr/ministere/europe-et-international/sommet-mondial-sante-mentale/>

A synthesis and a summary of the recommendations from each workshop are available at:

https://sante.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/sommet_mondial_sante_summary_document_en.pdf



NGOs (here Unicef) contributed to the debates in Paris

Core achievements

1- The Paris Summit called for mobilization to be sustained over the long term

The recurrence of summits and the successive mobilization of EU presidencies on the theme of mental health indicate that the community of advocates is growing. This should provide leverage for national policies to take greater account of these public health priorities, particularly for the most vulnerable, invest in their mental health systems and take greater account of the issue of rights, self-determination and the fight against stigma.

2- The Paris Summit called for priority mobilization in favor of young people and in particular the vulnerable ones.

This urgent need, emphasized by the covid crisis, is now high in the political agenda, and France organized a ministerial conference during the French presidency of the EU on this theme, a few months after the Paris Summit. This link and follow-up between high-level events was and still is an objective.

Remaining challenges

- › The **incorporation of international standards into national policies** remains highly inadequate, and work remains to be done with international organisations to **facilitate the “translation” of ambitious standards in concrete policy actions**.
- › Developing **multi-sectoral policies** remains a challenge at both national and international level. The current momentum in the mental health field is conducive to meeting this challenge. Following in the footsteps of a number of countries that have embarked on this path, in the wake of the Paris Summit, we are advocating the **creation of a dedicated inter-ministerial, cross-sectoral body/institution at national level in each country**, to accelerate operational actions mobilizing the various sectors.
- › Formalizing a **community of GMHS host countries** has yet to be achieved.

Skills, Rights, Care



**Advancing
community-
focused
approach to
mental health**

Rome 2022

The fourth edition of the Global Mental Health Summit (GMHS) was held on October 13-14, 2022 in Rome at the Monumental Complex of Santo Spirito in Sassia, in the premises of the oldest hospital in Europe.

The [GMHS 2022](#) has been organized by the **Italian Ministry of Health**, in collaboration with the World Health Organization and the Italian National Institute of Health (Istituto Superiore di Sanità).

The Summit proceeded along the roadmap launched in London in 2018 by further increasing mental health awareness and commitment, among policymakers and the civil society.



Flags of delegations represented at the GMHS 2022

Theme, topics and objective

Theme

Upon Italy's internationally recognised leadership in community mental health and deinstitutionalisation, that Italy has pioneered with Law 180 of 1978, promoted by Franco Basaglia, the main theme chosen by the Steering Committee of the GMHS 2022 has been **'Skills, rights and care'**.

Topics

The principal topics discussed during the Summit were the central role of a community-focused approach to mental health and the involvement of people with lived experience and their families in the process of care and recovery. These have been envisioned based on an overarching framework emphasising the human rights and dignity of people affected by mental health conditions.

It was highlighted that mental health should be regarded as an essential component in preparedness and response to emergencies, therefore prevention and intervention efforts should focus on addressing the needs of those mostly affected by crises.

It was remarked that there is a critical need for adequately funded, properly staffed, and well-organised mental health services and that the barriers to be overcome include, among others, lack of funding and investment in mental health care and research, scarcity of skilled human resources, societal stigma and discrimination.

The GHMS 2022 has also emphasized different capacity building strategies, such as the identification and sharing of good practices, including the new opportunities provided by digital mental health and other alternative initiatives developed during the recent pandemic. These strategies are instrumental to develop and strengthen the skills, abilities, processes, and resources that mental health services and communities need to effectively address the mental health needs of all people throughout their entire life.

Objective

The key objective of the GMHS 2022 was to strengthen global action from governments, international organisations and civil society to address the key issues related to mental health care, which has been upended under the pressure of the recent health and humanitarian crises, and overcoming the structural weaknesses that prevent millions of people from receiving adequate care for their mental health needs.

Core achievements

Engagement

- › The event was attended by around **300 registered people** and broadcasted live in English, French and Italian to over **4 000 viewers**.
- › **52 delegations** from 42 countries and 10 international organizations were officially represented and **23 international ministers and deputy ministers** were in attendance.
- › The Summit involved also national and international experts, representatives of Associations and Federations and **people with lived experiences**, that provided their testimony.
- › In the opening session, among others, speeches were provided by the Ukrainian first lady, **Olena Zelenska**, the Director General of the WHO, **Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus**, and **Stella Kyriakides**, EU Commissioner for Health.
- › 27 delegates from **10 low and middle-low income countries** were supported to attend the event.
- › A short [video](#) was realised to sum up the **highlights** of the Summit.



Snapshot of the Interventions by Heads of Delegations during GMHS 2022

Legacy

At the end of the Summit, it was announced that the Ministry of Health of Argentina will host the 5th edition of the GMHS in 2023. For the first time since its inception in 2018 a country outside of Europe will organize the event, upholding its global remit.

The last edition of the Summit marked the progression of an increased interest and discussion about mental health at the international level. During the GMHS 2022 it was introduced a thematic session focused on the workforce mental health, in Buenos Aires the same topic will be further explored during an ad-hoc workshop.

Core outcomes



Chair Report

All Countries and International Agencies convened in Rome for the Global Mental Health Summit, urged all relevant actors to implement recommendations presented in the WHO updated Comprehensive Mental Health Action Plan 2013-2030, and to improve integrated mental health measures in all the stages of life.

Countries and International Organizations participating in the Rome Global Mental Health Summit renewed their commitment to monitoring and documenting progress made to advance community-focused approach to mental health, also in the context of the forthcoming annual MH Summits.

The final outcome document of the GMHS 2022 was structured according to the 8 thematic sessions of the summit. The topics of the thematic sessions had to be interlinked with the main theme of the Summit: community mental health and deinstitutionalisation.

The **thematic sessions** included were:

- › Capacity building and skills
- › Children, youth and adolescents
- › Community mental health
- › Emergency preparedness
- › Implementation gap and sustainability
- › Innovation and mental health
- › People on the move
- › Workforce mental health



Main recommendation

Promoting mental health through activities and interventions performed in the community rather than in large institutional settings as an-evidence based approach to the fact that communities would best establish the mental health facilities that fit their unique needs, and that care is best provided where people get on with their lives.

Achievements and ongoing work

Before hosting GMHS 2023, Italy had been taking significant steps to address mental health issues, including promoting awareness and providing telehealth options. Among the measures that were adopted, since July 2022, it is possible for citizens with low income to require economical support for psychotherapy sessions to address conditions of depression, anxiety, stress and fragility.

At the international level Italy has strongly supported the relevance of mental health issues, stating clearly how important is to support initiatives to promote mental health in all policies.



2023
Buenos Aires