

The Regional Committee,

Recalling and reaffirming resolutions WPR/RC36.R17 and WPR/RC39.R13 on prevention of mental and neurological disorders and psychosocial problems;

Having reviewed the draft regional strategy for mental health;¹

Concerned about the increasing challenges to mental health in the Western Pacific Region and the burden of disability and death, especially from suicide, linked to mental and neurological disorders;

Acknowledging that governments and communities need to increase their awareness of the value of mental health, and the nature of mental disorders;

Acknowledging further the special mental health needs of vulnerable groups, including low-income communities, disaster victims, relief workers, women and children;

Convinced that mental health and mental disorders need to be included in public health priorities in Member States;

Recognizing the opportunities that exist to improve mental health in Member States, both through promotion of mental health, in many aspects of business and community life, and through the provision of services to people with mental disorders and their families;

Recognizing further the increased attention given to mental health by WHO, for example through the dedication of World Health Day and the World Health Report to mental health in 2001;

1. ENDORSES the regional strategy for mental health, taking into account the views of Member States as noted in the summary record and as expressed at the ministerial round table;

2. URGES Member States:

(1) to use the regional strategy for mental health as a framework for the development of national mental health programmes, adjusting certain aspects of it where appropriate;

(2) to encourage recognition of mental health as a valued community resource and to involve general health services as well as non-health sectors, such as education, employment, business and family welfare, and nongovernmental organizations in supporting mental health and preventing mental disorders;

(3) to ensure that national development programmes take into account the impact of social and economic factors on mental health;

(4) to provide access to appropriate services for early intervention, treatment and rehabilitation, including active community involvement, and to reinforce family support for people with mental disorders in order to reduce the burden of mental disorders;

3. REQUESTS the Regional Director:

(1) to support Member States in building capacity, including human resource development, and in implementing national programmes based on the regional strategy for mental health;

(2) to facilitate exchange of knowledge and experience in the field of mental health among Member States;

(3) to produce an analysis of the mental health situation in the Region, incorporating the results of an assessment of needs in selected countries and areas, in order to support a greater understanding of mental health issues among policy-makers and other partners in the Region and to facilitate the effective development of national and regional mental health programmes;

(4) to continue to work with Member States and other international development partners to raise awareness of mental health and mental disorders as a priority area, and to advocate for greater resources to improve mental health in the Region;

(5) to report to the Regional Committee at regular intervals on the mental health situation in the Region.

Seventh meeting, 14 September 2001
WPR/RC52/SR/7

¹ Document WPR/RC52/14.