



# ABOUT WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY LIVING WITH SCHIZOPHRENIA

**Every 10 October is World Mental Health Day (WMHD), the signature project of the World Federation for Mental Health (WFMH) to promote education, awareness and advocacy about mental health.**

Since 1992, WMHD has been drawing attention to the fact that mental illness affects millions of people worldwide regardless of race, gender, culture, political beliefs or socio-economic status. **It is estimated that 450 million people worldwide have a mental disorder and fewer than half receive the treatment they need<sup>1</sup>.**

Every year World Mental Health Day focuses around a topic to inspire people, inform and advocate for action towards the improvement of services for those with mental illnesses and to prevent mental disorders. This year the focus is on **Living with Schizophrenia**.

In recent decades, there has been a change in attitude from the general public and from mental healthcare professionals towards the treatment of people with mental illnesses and prolonged hospitalisation is no longer the preferred form of management for mental illnesses.<sup>3</sup>

Community based mental health and support services are becoming integrated into primary health settings and people with mental illnesses and their carers are now encouraged to participate in treatment decisions to help those with mental illnesses achieve a state of well-being and quality of life that allows them to stay in touch with their community.

Members of the World Federation for Mental Health from over 150 countries come together every October to observe the day.

Mental illnesses are among the top 20 reasons for disability worldwide and are considered the top public health challenges and priorities by the World Health Organization.<sup>2</sup>

The WFMH website (<http://wfmh.com/world-mental-health-day/wfmhd-materials/>) offers a number of popular information packs in multiple languages including Spanish, French, Hindi, Russian, Japanese, Chinese and Arabic that are free of charge and available year-round.

## References

1. World Health Organization (WHO), 2003. "Investing in Mental Health", Accessed May 2014, from [http://www.who.int/mental\\_health/media/investing\\_mnh.pdf](http://www.who.int/mental_health/media/investing_mnh.pdf).
2. WHO, 2004. "The Global Burden of Disease", Accessed April 2014, from [http://www.who.int/healthinfo/global\\_burden\\_disease/2004\\_report\\_update/en/](http://www.who.int/healthinfo/global_burden_disease/2004_report_update/en/)
3. Torres-Gonzalez, F., I. Ibanez-Casas, S. Saldivia, D. Ballester, P. Grandon, B. Moreno-Kustner, M. Xavier and M. Gomez-Beneyto. "Unmet needs in the management of schizophrenia." *Neuropsychiatr Dis Treat* 2014;10: 97–110.