



**MGMH**  
Movement for Global Mental Health



SA Federation for  
Mental Health

Press Release:

## **5<sup>th</sup> Global Mental Health Summit to be hosted in South Africa**

The Movement for Global Mental Health (MGMH) and the SA Federation for Mental Health (SAFMH) as the Secretariat of the MGMH, will be hosting the 5<sup>th</sup> Global Mental Health Summit in Johannesburg, South Africa from 8-9 February 2018 at the University of Witwatersrand, Medical Campus in Parktown.

Since the establishment of the MGMH, a biennial Summit had been hosted - the first in Athens in 2009, the second in Cape Town in 2011, the third in Bangkok in 2013 and the 4th in Mumbai in 2015.

The theme of the 5<sup>th</sup> Global Mental Health Summit is *“Leaving no one behind”* as per the aspirations of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Summit will bring in a strong element that focus on the empowerment and human rights of persons with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities, globally.

**The Summit panel discussions will revolve around the following topics:**

- Persons with Lived Experience – the key partners in mental health and sustainable development
- Value of research to advance the social movement – the role of persons with lived experience in research
- Overcoming poverty through quality education and decent work and economic growth
- Changing the culture around mental health, mental disorders and emotional wellbeing
- Getting “creative and innovative” to achieve recovery and mental wellbeing
- Infants, toddlers and young children - affording them mental health and wellbeing
- Empowering the youth to play a role in achieving the SDGs
- Not forgetting the vulnerable groups
- Deinstitutionalisation and community integration – a human right
- Civil society's role in achieving the SDGs

- Social movements giving a voice to persons with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities
- Transforming cities

International experts, well-regarded professionals in the field and international representatives will share their knowledge and experience and engage the audience in discussions to ultimately find ways in which mental health globally can address the current gaps in services, provide services and interventions that are evidence-based and respect and protect the rights of persons affected by mental health related conditions and disabilities, and ensure that no one is left behind.

An exciting activity that will take place at the Summit is the official launch of the Global Mental Health Peer Network (GMHPN), a mental health care user organisation that will facilitate the establishment of a global network of persons with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities and the advocacy groups representing them. Mental health user movements and groups exist in many countries and functioning at various levels, some may struggle to exist, or may not exist at all. A global network may provide an opportunity to strengthen the ones that exist and assist the development where such movements or groups are lacking. At a global level, there's a lack of collaboration amongst user movements and a global network could form a stronger and united voice in mental health through addressing human rights violations and issues that affecting persons with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities together. Such a network could also provide a platform for support, sharing of experiences and good practice, and linking up with relevant resources and potential partners. This will tie in with the MGMH's Principal Coordinator's vision to strengthen the voice of persons with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities globally. At the same time, the GMHPN will further provide for an ideal platform for persons with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities to be key partners in mental health and have a direct link to researchers, policy makers, and professionals in the field of mental health and human rights, and governments in the upscaling of mental health care and services.

The MGMH ([www.globalmentalhealth.org](http://www.globalmentalhealth.org)) and SAFMH ([www.safmh.org](http://www.safmh.org)) wish to invite all who are interested in mental health and upscaling services through guidance of evidence, innovation, good practice and human rights. The deadline for registrations is 15 December 2017 – email: [summit@globalmentalhealth.org](mailto:summit@globalmentalhealth.org)

### **About the MGMH**

The history of the MGMH began in 2007 with a Call for Action published in the first Lancet Series on Global Mental Health. The MGMH has grown into a reputable global organisation since its establishment in 2007, and owes its status to the dedication and drive of the Secretariat, International Advisory Board, members and member organisations.

## **About the Principal Coordinator**

The activities of the MGMH is coordinated by the Principal Coordinator. Every 3 years a new Principal Coordinator is appointed to serve a 3 year term in office and the Secretariat based at a supporting organisation or institution. The International Advisory Board is appointed in an advisory capacity to the Principal Coordinator.

Ms Charlene Sunkel from South Africa has officially taken over the lead as Principal Coordinator from 1 January 2017. As a person with a psychosocial disability and working in the field of mental health and advocacy, Charlene is very passionate about improving the lives of persons living with mental health problems and psychosocial disability, empowering them and giving them a voice to speak for themselves. Her vision for the term (2017-2019) that she will be serving as the Principal Coordinator of the MGMH is to work towards enhancing the voice of persons with mental health problems and psychosocial disability globally and where they can create valued partnerships with key role players in the mental health field to upscale mental health services and improve the quality of life of mental health care users.

**The Principal Coordinator commits to undertake various activities as a means to realise her vision, and include:**

- To reach out to all corners of the world and not to leave anyone behind – building onto the membership of the MGMH to expand and create a more diverse mental health community that enhances the value of sharing initiatives and experiences
- To strengthen the voice of people with mental health problems, psychosocial and intellectual disabilities through joining them up with the MGMH and create a platform for them to share their views, opinions and experiences
- Continue to encourage sharing and dissemination of evidence based information, and showcasing innovation in the field, amongst members, higher educational institutions, Governments, policymakers, stakeholders, people with mental health problems, psychosocial and intellectual disabilities, the media and the public – that adds value and guidance to planning of upscaling services in diverse settings globally
- To emphasise the importance of protecting and respecting the rights of persons with mental health problems, psychosocial and intellectual disabilities by promoting international treaties and human rights laws

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