

UW GLOBAL MENTAL HEALTH NEWSLETTER

Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month

July is National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month. Since the US House of Representatives passed the resolution in 2008 in honor of Bebe Moore Campbell, mental health advocates in the United States have focused attention on improving access to mental health care and increasing public awareness among BIPOC communities, in particular, about mental illness. Ms. Campbell, an award-winning novelist and journalist, co-founded the National Alliance on Mental Illness Urban Los Angeles and worked to end stigma associated with mental disorders.

UW GMH Practicum Student - COVID-19 Around the World

Over the past year, GMH practicum students explored responses to mental health needs during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Paige Liscombe sets the stage.

On May 13, 2020, the United Nations (UN) Secretary-General António Guterres released the Policy Brief: "COVID-19 and the Need for Action on Mental Health." Not only is this ongoing pandemic a physical crisis, it has and will continue to be a mental health crisis. The three recommended areas for action outlined in this policy brief are: 1) consciously including this issue in response plans taking a whole-of-society approach; 2) ensuring widespread availability of emergency mental health and psychosocial support; and 3) building mental health services for the future, overcoming the long-standing underinvestment in this area.

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University of Washington
Behavioral Research Center for HIV

BIRCH SPARC Awards

On behalf of the Developmental Core of the UW Behavioral Research Center for HIV (BIRCH), we are very excited to share the Request for Applications (RFA) for the Synergistic Pilot AIDS Research Center (SPARC) Awards! Through this RFA for pilot awards, the UW BIRCH aims to support researchers to conduct work that examines mental health and associated conditions in the context of HIV. Successful awardees will be included in the SPARC Scholars program which includes monthly fellowships meetings, access to mentors across the UW BIRCH network, and opportunities to collaborate with other SPARC scholars.

Some key details (follow the link below to access the full RFA)

- Direct costs: \$8,000 per year for up to 2 years (\$16,000 maximum for the 2-year duration, no more than \$8,000/year)
- Letter of intent due August 9, 2021
- Eligibility check due August 9, 2021
- Consultation with the Methods Core due August 13, 2021
- Final application due August 22, 2021 at 11:59 PM
- Notice of award by September 10, 2021
- Period of performance: September 13, 2021 to August 30, 2023

[\[Find full details on the temporary BIRCH website\]](#)

Special Issue on "Global Mental Health and HIV Prevention and Care"

In June 2021, the Journal for International AIDS Society published a Special Issue on "Global Mental Health and HIV Prevention and Care" with guest editors Robert H Remien, Melanie Amna Abas, Vikram Patel, and Dixon Chibanda. Two publications by Global Mental Health faculty and staff were published in the special issue:

- "Intervening for HIV prevention and mental health: a review of global literature" by **Pamela Y Collins, Jennifer Velloza, Tessa Concepcion, Linda Oseso, Lydia Chwastiak, Christopher G Kemp, Jane Simoni, Bradley H Wagenaar**
- "Assessing longitudinal patterns of depressive symptoms and the influence of symptom trajectories on HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis adherence among adolescent girls in the HPTN 082 randomized controlled trial" by **Jennifer Velloza**, Sybil Hosek, Deborah Donnell, Peter L Anderson, Mike Chirenje, Nyaradzo Mgodzi, Linda-Gail Bekker, Sinead Delany-Moretlwe, Connie Celum, for the HPTN 082 study group

[\[You can access all the articles for free here\]](#)

Global Mental Health and Psychoses

Psychotic symptoms are sometimes the main signs of a mental illness that family members, friends, or doctors recognize. Psychoses can cause considerable disability and are associated with higher mortality, and social exclusion, and human rights abuses. Early interventions can avert morbidity, and support for recovery can enable people with psychoses to manage their lives successfully. Resources for mental health services in many parts of the world flow disproportionately to institutional care, where services for these conditions are frequently located.

This month we shine a light on studies aimed at the care and support for people for people with psychoses.

Digital Mental Health Toolkit for Healers in West Africa

Global Mental Health faculty member, Dror Ben Zeev, and Professor Angela Ofori-Atta (University of Ghana), show that partnering with healers in West Africa to create a mental health application is possible, expanding options for quality care. The study is the first to develop a digital mental health toolkit for healers in West Africa. Engaging healers in user-centered development produced an accessible and acceptable resource. Future field testing will determine whether M-Healer can improve healer practices that support mental health and reduce human rights abuses.

[\[Read the full article here\]](#)

New Lancet Psychiatry Commission on Psychoses

A new Lancet Psychiatry Commission on Psychoses in Global Context, led by Professor Craig Morgan from the Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience, has been launched to address the challenges that people with psychosis in low-income countries experience. The report, set to be published in 2022, will evaluate existing evidence on psychoses and make recommendations to guide research, policy, and development in this area.

Psychoses affect more than 20 million people around the world. People who experience psychoses are at high risk of experiencing impoverishment, premature mortality, marginalization and discrimination, human rights violations, and poor social outcomes. Discrimination has been further highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic, with vaccination programs neglecting to prioritize those with psychoses despite evidence of increased infection rates and poorer outcomes. Moreover, people with psychoses experience many barriers to accessing mental health services, particularly in low-income countries where services are severely under-resourced.

[\[Read more here\]](#)

GMH Events, Opportunities and Updates

- In June 2021, CBM Global and their partners **launched the first five Community Mental Health "Good Practice Guides"**, which shared lessons learnt from their

global work on mental health for over 20 years. These can be used by anyone, regardless of role, expertise, or area of focus. The guides focus on Peer-Support, Community Mental Health Forums, Stigma and Awareness Raising, Mental Health System Strengthening, and Neglected Tropical Diseases & Mental Wellbeing. [Access the guides here.](#)

- Consortium on refugees' and migrants' mental health (CoReMH) **published an advocacy brief on the issues emerging** from the screening regulation of new EU pact on Migration and asylum. Read the full [press release](#) and [advocacy brief](#).
- Natasha Muller Impact, United for Global Mental Health and Arabella Advisors **launched a new report: 'Unlocking The Power of Philanthropy: How Next Generation Philanthropists Can Transform Mental Health Funding'**. With practical guidance and case studies, the report provides an initial playbook for philanthropists wanting to get started in mental health or looking for ways to expand their support.
- The **Behavioral Research Center for HIV (UW BIRCH) is now accepting membership requests**. BIRCH members are faculty, research scientists, clinicians, staff, trainees, and other personnel involved in HIV, mental health, or related behavioral science research or practice at the University of Washington, as well as partners and affiliates in the U.S. and across the globe who are interested in these topics. [Complete the BIRCH membership request to join.](#)
- The Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences is hosting its 2nd annual conference on "**Re-Imagining Behavioral Health: Race, Equity, and Social Justice Conference.**" The conference will take place on Sept 23 and 24. Topics will include an overview of the Indian Healthcare System, leading inclusion through the lens of safety, mattering and belonging, LGBTQA primers and racial equity action plans. More information and registration information coming soon.

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