



H.E Minister of Health Dr Ali Hyasat delivering his speech during the World Mental Health Day 2014 celebration Under the Patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Muna Al Hussein, WHO in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, partners and beneficiaries including “Our Step Association”, International Federation of Medical Students Association (Jordan), Caritas Jordan, and International Medical Corps celebrated World Mental Health Day 2014 on 13 October with the theme “Living with schizophrenia”.

In her remarks, WHO Representative to Jordan Dr Maria Cristina Profili highlighted the interconnectedness between physical, mental and social aspects of health, emphasizing their importance in contributing to enhanced social capital and economic development. Mental health is intrinsic to people’s quality of life and their participation as effective members of society, she noted.

“Living a healthy life with severe mental disorders is possible with appropriate treatment and the adoption of a healthy lifestyle. The shift in approach is to look at people’s ability and not at their disability. In fact, there is only one disability in the world: stigma, as people living with mental disorders have the right to live like everyone else!” Dr Profili stated.

She also referred to WHO’s Mental Health Gap Action Programme, which addresses mental health priority conditions through various interventions, including the integration of mental health into primary care.

His Excellency the Minister of Health Dr Ali Hyasat asserted the commitment of the Ministry of Health to scaling-up mental health services across the Kingdom in line with the national mental health policy, which was launched in January 2011.

The mental health unit established at Ma'an Governmental Hospital in collaboration with WHO and the Jordanian Nursing Council, was cited as a good example of the efforts to integrate mental health services in general health care services. "There is a need to create similar units in several general hospitals across the Kingdom," Dr Hyasat said.

As part of the World Mental Health Day activities, a national campaign under the theme of "Living with mental illness" was launched from 15 to 25 September 2014 reaching citizens and refugees living in Jordan. Throughout the campaign, a number of activities took place to promote mental health awareness including lectures, group discussions, interviews and dissemination of educational materials in different settings: schools, universities, community-based organizations, health centres and public arenas. A short video capturing the main highlights of this campaign was shown at the World Mental Health Day event.

Mental health is an integral and essential component of health. The World Health Organization constitution defines health as "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity". An important implication of this definition is that mental health is more than just the absence of mental disorders or disabilities.

The World Health Organization in Jordan in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and other partners, including the Jordanian Nursing Council, has been supporting the scaling up of mental health services, raising awareness, capacity building, advocating against social exclusion, stigma and discrimination of mental illness and mobilizing resources in support of the mental health sector.

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