

## Press release for World Suicide Prevention Day September 10, 2006

On September 8th, 2006 a Press Conference will be held at Conference Room 2 at the United Nations Offices in New York, where the International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP), in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Federation for Mental Health (WFMH) will announce September 10th as the Fourth World Suicide Prevention Day.



**IASP**

AN INITIATIVE OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION (IASP)  
CO-SPONSORED BY THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION (WHO)



Throughout the world, national and local events, including conferences, meetings, concerts and activities with spiritual or cultural contents have been organized to enhance understanding about suicide and to demonstrate ways in which knowledge about suicide can be translated into effective suicide prevention programmes. This year's theme "With Understanding, New Hope" emphasizes the importance of translating the knowledge and understanding of suicide into the development of effective suicide prevention strategies and programmes.

"In this age of preoccupation with global violence, terrorism and homicides, we often ignore the fact that worldwide more people kill themselves than die in all wars, terrorist acts and interpersonal violence combined," said Professor Brian Mishara, the President of the International Association for Suicide Prevention. "More than a million people worldwide die by suicide each year, many more millions make suicide attempts severe enough to need medical treatment and millions of others are affected by the disastrous impact of a suicide. We have now developed enough understanding of suicide to prevent a significant proportion of these tragic deaths, to treat suicidal individuals and help families bereaved by suicide. There is a great need to translate our very considerable knowledge about why people attempt to take their lives into effective strategies, policies, programmes and services, to reduce the tragic loss of lives and the devastating effects of suicidal behaviour. Promising areas for suicide prevention include improving mental health treatment and management, educating physicians and the community, restricting access to lethal means of suicide, providing help in crisis situations and support after suicide attempts, and improving media coverage of suicide."

Suicide is the result of a complex interaction of causal factors, including mental illness, poverty, substance abuse, social isolation, losses, relationship difficulties and workplace problems. To be effective, suicide prevention needs to incorporate a multi-faceted approach that acknowledges the multiple causes and pathways to suicidal behaviour and involves health and mental health

professionals, volunteers, researchers, families and others bereaved by suicide as well as central and local governments, education, justice, police, employers, religious leaders, politicians and the media.

"We need to use our knowledge to develop coordinated and comprehensive suicide prevention initiatives throughout the world, adapted to local cultures and resources, to reduce the number of completed suicides, suicide attempts and the consequences of suicide and self-destructive behaviours. The theme of World Suicide Prevention Day 2006, "With Understanding New Hope," is an opportunity for persons with experience in understanding suicidal behaviour, including researchers, clinicians and practitioners, to share their knowledge and highlight ways this knowledge can be applied to suicide prevention activities, programmes and policies. Public forums, educational activities and awareness campaigns throughout the world are being held on September 10th. It is our hope that these activities will help change public attitudes and increase awareness and knowledge about suicide as a major public health problem that is preventable," said Professor Mishara.

The International Association for Suicide Prevention was founded in Vienna in 1960 as a working fellowship of researchers, clinicians, practitioners, volunteers and national and local organizations of many kinds. IASP, in official relation with the World Health Organization and in collaboration with the World Federation for Mental Health, believes that suicide prevention should be given greater priority at national, regional and local levels to incorporate research knowledge that has shown that suicide is preventable. Examples of activities held on this day in different countries are posted on the IASP Website:

[www.iasp.info](http://www.iasp.info).

#### For further information, contact:

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Please visit the IASP website

<http://www.iasp.info>

To enter the "members only" part of the website you must use the userid: **iasp** and the password: **oelad**

# 2006 World Mental Health Day Campaign "Building Awareness – Reducing Risk: Mental Illness and Suicide".

The World Federation for Mental Health (WFMH) has a World Mental Health Day (October 10th) each year to focus attention on a mental health issue and to promote mental health. This year the focus is on suicide. The 2006 World Mental Health Day Campaign is entitled: "Building Awareness – Reducing Risk: Mental Illness and Suicide".

The WFMH has initiated an awareness and educational campaign that highlights the role that mental illness (including substance abuse and dependence) can play in risk for suicide. An important part of this campaign is the educational and informational package that the WFMH has prepared.

The campaign packet includes a range of background summaries, fact sheets and reproducible handouts that can be used in preparing community-based awareness and education programmes and workshops. These materials cover a number of im-

portant sub-topics of the WFMH campaign, including:

- Mental illnesses and suicide across the lifespan;
- Reducing risk of suicide for people with mental illnesses;
- Key suicide indicators and risk factors;
- Efficacy of mental health care and promotion in reducing risk of suicide;
- Cultural and religious contexts and variation in addressing suicide and mental illness.

The campaign packet also includes material directed at two critical and related issues to which the WFMH suggest mental health organizations need to give special attention: i. the effect of stigma and misunderstanding that continue to serve as barriers to the early recognition and treatment of mental illnesses, and, ii. the importance of responsible media coverage of mental illness and suicide. These campaign materials are available and can be downloaded at the WFMH website:

[www.wfmh.org/wmhd2006.htm](http://www.wfmh.org/wmhd2006.htm)

The International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP) and the WFMH are collaborating to jointly promote World Suicide Prevention Day (September 10th) and World Mental Health Day (October 10th). The WFMH President, Mrs. Shona Sturgeon of South Africa, believes that this collaboration will add to the impact and benefit of both these global awareness days, and will increase the value that each day has in improving public awareness, reducing stigma and discrimination, and promoting service and policy advocacy to address the global impact that suicide associated with mental illnesses has on the global burden of disease.

## World Suicide Prevention Day 2006 in Brazil

This is the fourth consecutive year we are doing an activity in the WSPD in our general hospital. We are happy because in these years, no suicide occurred in our hospital, while 1 or 2 used to occur every year before these activities. In 2006, it will comprise two days of activities related to the prevention of suicidal behaviors. On September 11th we will deliver a brief training on suicide prevention for the clinical personnel of the hospital (including nursing attendants, nurses, etc.). On September 12th two lectures will be presented (by M.D. Ph. D Cláudio Laks Eizirick, President of the International Psychoanalysis Association (IPA) and Ph. D. Blanca Werlang, a Psychologist who studies historical aspects of suicide behavior). These lectures will regard the psychodynamics and historical aspects of suicide. We are also developing a guideline for management of suicide risk on our hospital that will be presented to the hospital staff on September 12th. Thanks for the attention,

MD Marco Antonio Knob Caldieraro, Hospital de Clínicas de Porto Alegre, Serviço de Psiquiatria, from the city of Porto Alegre, Brasil.



As **World Suicide Prevention Day** (10th September) approaches many people will be consulting the IASP website to see what type of activities they could undertake to mark the day. Please tell us what activities you have planned to commemorate World Suicide Prevention Day. You can do this by emailing Annette Beauvais [suicide@chmeds.ac.nz](mailto:suicide@chmeds.ac.nz) or by entering your activities onto the form provided on the website:

<https://wo.uio.no/as/WebObjects/nettskjema.woa/wa/svar?id=18802>

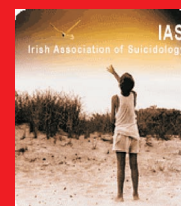
Examples of activities that are planned for 2006 or that have been used to mark World Suicide Prevention Day in previous years are available at the IASP website: [www.med.uio.no/iasp/english/wspd/2006/wspd\\_menu2006.html](http://www.med.uio.no/iasp/english/wspd/2006/wspd_menu2006.html)

### Suicide Prevention Australia SPA NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2006 "Connecting Pathways – Big Country, Big Picture"

The SPA National Conference will be held on 2nd – 5th November 2006 at the Stamford Grand Adelaide, at Glenelg, Adelaide, South Australia. Details of the conference programme are available at: [www.suicidepreventionaust.org/corp\\_conference\\_2006.htm](http://www.suicidepreventionaust.org/corp_conference_2006.htm). To register for the conference go to: [www.suicidepreventionaust.org/corp\\_conference\\_2006\\_form.php](http://www.suicidepreventionaust.org/corp_conference_2006_form.php)



### Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention Convention 2006 - October 25-27, 2006 Toronto, Ontario, Canada



"Complexity of Suicide: Prevention, Intervention and Aftermath". The objectives of this conference are to provide participants with suicide prevention training, intervention skills and knowledge. In addressing the complexity of suicide in our communities, emphasis will also be placed on building resources for professionals and families, while providing postvention support for survivors. Details of the conference programme are available at: [www.suicideconference2006.ca/](http://www.suicideconference2006.ca/)

### "Women's Health and Suicide"

The Irish Association for Suicidology will hold the 11th Annual Conference on 29th-30th September 2006, at the West County Hotel, Ennis. Details of the conference programme are available at: [www.ias.ie/files/library/IAS\\_11thAnnualConferenceApplication.pdf](http://www.ias.ie/files/library/IAS_11thAnnualConferenceApplication.pdf)