

statement

IFPMA Statement, WHA 66, Item 13.3, Mental Health

Delivered by Mr Mario Ottiglio, Director, Public Affairs and Global Health Policy

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to this leading discussion today. IFPMA represents leading research-based pharmaceutical companies as well as national and regional industry associations worldwide.

IFPMA highly commends the WHO Secretariat for its vision and resolute leadership in addressing mental health. The Mental Health Global Action Plan captures years of hard work and offers a roadmap to tackle a global health priority. Mental and neurological disorders—MNDs—go too often silent and yet exert a paramount toll on individuals, societies, and the economy.

Evidence shows that we must work in partnerships to reduce the burden of mental and neurological disorders and improve mental health. Overcoming stigma—including self-stigma, strengthening primary care services, and engaging the social, economic, and education branches of governments and across sectors are pivotal tasks for the global health community. The mental health action plan makes it clear: to go forward, MNDs cannot be seen—or delegated—as a topic confined to the health sector alone. They require innovative collaborations and innovative therapies.

Our industry is actively engaged in the fight against mental & neurological disorders. We have more than 200 compounds in research and development, and several on-the-ground partnerships to help patients. A concerted approach to reprioritize brain research to match the burden from MNDs is clearly needed. Depression alone is expected by WHO to be by 2030—in 17 years only—the largest cause of disease burden worldwide.

Mr. Chairman, we would like to share with you an IFPMA initiative in support of the 3rd objective under the mental health action plan which focuses on multisectoral action.

We launched yesterday the “Do You Mind?” campaign, an interactive website where people can explore how different stakeholders—whether one is a policymaker, a researcher, a patient, or a relative of someone with an MND—can play her part in addressing these disorders.

Addressing MNDs requires commitment of everyone. The bio-psycho-social factors responsible for MNDs ask us to think—and act—in collaboration. We look forward to galvanizing support, awareness, and action from different stakeholders to identify solutions that improve the health of people globally.

Thank you.