



WORLD CONGRESS  
**Mental Health 2022**  
LONDON

“Mental health:  
a global priority”

June 28<sup>th</sup> – July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022

Central Hall Westminster  
Storey's Gate - London - SW1H 9NH

EACCME applied for



<b>PLENARY SESSION EIGHT</b>	
Event Code: LEE22-00523 World Mental Health Congress London Mental Health a Global Priority, London, UK 28/06/2022-01/07/2022	
<b>Your details</b> (as you want them listed in the programme)	Dainius Puras
<b>Date and time of your plenary session</b>	Thursday 30 June 2022 14:30-16:10hrs Overall Session Theme: Dignity and rights
<b>Duration</b>	20 mins
<b>Proposed title</b> (please complete)	Embracing human rights in mental health policies and services: what kind of change is needed?
<b>Learning Objectives</b> (please complete)	The audience will learn about the changing normative framework in the field of mental health and human rights during the last two decades The audience will learn recommendations from international organizations and understand what argument are behind inviting to move to policy changes in global mental health. Specific issues, such as power asymmetries, biased use of knowledge and excessive use of biomedical model, will be highlighted
<b>Abstract</b> (max 500 words)	<p>Mental health has been recognized as a new priority in the broad area of health related policies. There is a high level of agreement among experts about the need to invest more and with new quality in all elements of mental health services. This includes promotion, prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and recovery.</p> <p>However, there remains disagreement among experts on important issues, such as – whether investments should continue supporting the “status quo” within mental health systems, or time might have come to move away from “status quo” and to prioritize services that fully embrace human rights based approach.</p> <p>While many experts, especially those representing psychiatric profession, call for investing more in existing infrastructure of mental health services and prevailing treatment measures, there is an increasing number of organizations and experts who urge to move away from the status quo. Resolutions from the UN Human Rights Council, reports of the UN Special rapporteurs, WHO QualityRights Initiative and the recent WHO document - Guidance on community mental health services (2021) are convincing examples of the emerging new position. This position highlights the need to invest in rights based services and to move towards ending reliance on coercion, institutionalization and over-medicalization in the field of mental health services.</p> <p>There is a strong need for change in the systems and culture of services, so that approaches based on paternalism and coercion are prevented and replaced by services that are empowering, inclusive and promote recovery. The prevailing message within the Movement for global mental health so far has been to focus on the treatment gap to be closed and heavy burden of mental disorders to be addressed. Other group of experts tends to see the</p>



	<p>focus on such message as a risk of the next wave of excessive medicalization and remaining reliance on status quo. This is why they urge for embracing fully the human rights based approach and investing firstly in those alternatives to existing system of services, that are free from coercion and provide diverse spectrum of support services and good quality psychosocial interventions in the community level.</p> <p>Experts who call for the shift of paradigm, urge to address excessive use of biomedical model, remaining power asymmetries between providers and users of services, and biased use of knowledge as main obstacles on the way to the realization of the right to mental health.</p> <p>Many promising rights based practices from global South and global North should be explored and replicated. To achieve measurable change, medical education and mental health research should strengthen the focus on developing and replicating innovations from social sciences and human rights based approach as new priorities.</p> <p>Mental health and well-being of individuals and populations can be effectively promoted and protected only when states invest in sustainable way in enabling, supportive and free from violence environments in all settings (family, school, workplace, community, society at large). This principle includes mental health services which should abandon legacy of human rights abuses and promote human rights based approach in a non-selective way.</p>
<p><b>Key references or resources</b> (maximum five)</p>	<p>Mental health and human rights. Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council. 2016. United Nations General Assembly, A/HRC/Res/32/18.</p> <p>Mental health and human rights. Resolution adopted by the United Nations Human Rights Council. 2017. United Nations General Assembly, A/HRC/Res/36/13.</p> <p>Mental health and human rights. Resolution adopted by the United Nations Human Rights Council. 2020. United Nations General Assembly, A/HRC/Res/43/13.</p> <p>WHO. Guidance on community mental health services: Promoting person-centred and rights-based approaches. 2021. Geneva: World Health Organization. <a href="https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240025707">https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240025707</a>.</p> <p>Puras, D., &amp; Gooding, P. (2019). Mental Health and Human Rights in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. <i>World Psychiatry</i>, 18(1), 4243. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1002/wps.20599">https://doi.org/10.1002/wps.20599</a></p>