

# Bulletin of the Mental Health and Specialized Programs Unit



September 2006

Unit Team

Dr. Jorge Rodríguez  
Unit Chief (Washington,  
D.C.)  
[difabioj@paho.org](mailto:difabioj@paho.org)

Dr. Hugo Cohen, Subregional  
Adviser on Mental Health for  
South America (Argentina)  
[cohenh@arg.ops-oms.org](mailto:cohenh@arg.ops-oms.org)

Dr. Maristela Monteiro  
Regional Adviser on Alcohol  
and Substance Abuse  
(Washington, D.C.)  
[monteirm@paho.org](mailto:monteirm@paho.org)

Dr. Victor Aparicio Basauri,  
Subregional Adviser on Mental  
Health for Central America,  
Mexico, and the Latin  
Caribbean Countries  
(Panama)  
[rodrigo@pan.ops-oms.org](mailto:rodrigo@pan.ops-oms.org)

Dr. Armando Vásquez,  
Regional Adviser on  
Rehabilitation (Santiago,  
Chile)  
[vasqueza@chi.ops-oms.org](mailto:vasqueza@chi.ops-oms.org)

Mr. Javier Vásquez  
Human Rights Specialist,  
Legal Affairs Area/Technology  
and Health Services Delivery  
Area (Washington, D.C.)  
[vasquezj@paho.org](mailto:vasquezj@paho.org)

Secretariat:  
Mrs. Amalia Paredes  
[paredama@paho.org](mailto:paredama@paho.org)  
Mrs. Martha Koev  
[koevmart@paho.org](mailto:koevmart@paho.org)

*The Mental Health and Specialized Programs Unit of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)/World Health Organization (WHO) is pleased to send you a new issue of the Bulletin. Like previous issues, the object of this publication is to communicate important advances, news, and information on publications in the fields of mental health, the control of alcohol and substance abuse, rehabilitation, and the international protection of human rights in this context. The main objectives of this Unit are to strengthen the countries' capacity to develop mental health policies, plans, programs, and services; formulate public policies for the control of alcohol abuse; prevent disabilities and achieve equal opportunities for people with disabilities; and promote and protect the human rights and fundamental liberties of people with disabilities and their families. In this issue, the bulletin highlights advances in the promotion and protection of the human rights of people with mental illness.*

## Designation of the New Unit Chief of the Mental Health & Specialized Programs of PAHO/WHO and the New Sub-regional Adviser on Mental Health for Central America and the Spanish-Speaking Caribbean.

We are pleased to announce that Dr. Jorge Rodríguez has been appointed as the new Unit Chief of the Mental Health & Specialized Programs of PAHO/WHO, effective 18 September 2006.

Dr. Rodríguez, up to now Sub-regional Adviser on Mental Health for Central America, Mexico, and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean, was named after competing with other candidates with excellent credentials for the post. Dr. Rodríguez has had an extensive professional and academic career in psychiatry in Cuba, a fruitful career in international mental health that began in Africa, continued in UNICEF, and more recently, at PAHO. Dr. Rodríguez has a lengthy list of publications, based on his social psychiatric research—among them, a book soon to be published on mental health in disasters.

His appointment concludes the interim assignment of Dr. Itzhak Levav, who has held this post since Dr. José Caldas de Almeida returned to his home country in November 2005. Dr. Rodríguez will be succeeded by Dr. Victor Aparicio Basauri as Sub-regional Adviser on Mental Health for Central America, Mexico, and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean, effective 1 October 2006.

## Redesignation of the PAHO/WHO Collaborating Center for Research and Training in Mental Health at Douglas Hospital in Montreal, Canada

The PAHO/WHO Collaborating Center for Research and Training in Mental Health at Douglas Hospital in Montreal, which has long supported the mental health programs of PAHO, WHO, and other regions, has been newly reconfirmed for a four-year period (2006-2010), under the following terms of reference:

1. Research, training and technical assistance

# Bulletin of the Mental Health and Specialized Programs Unit

2. To assist WHO in preparing the WHO World Atlas on Intellectual Disabilities
3. To organize the Second International Conference on Intellectual Disabilities and Mental Retardation
4. Mental Health and work

The Center's Director is Dr. Gaston Harnois, whose e-mail is: [hargas@douglas.mcgill.ca](mailto:hargas@douglas.mcgill.ca)

## Practical Guide on Mental Health in Disaster Situations (Available in Spanish only)

More practical and operational in its orientation, this book complements the publication of several years ago on the same topic. Coordinated by Drs. Jorge Rodríguez and Mónica Zaccarelli, it is a very useful tool for courses and workshops and especially for training first responders in mental health.

This guide is available at <http://www.paho.org/spanish/dd/ped/GuiaSaludMental.htm>

There is an English version of the Guide, but it must be adapted and modified for the Caribbean and the global level.

### Forthcoming Events:

- World Mental Health Day is on 10/10:  
Building Awareness-Reducing Risk: Mental Illness and Suicide  
The 2006 World Mental Health Day global awareness campaign packets are available from The World Federation for Mental Health and may be requested by e-mailing the Federation at [wmhday@wfmh.com](mailto:wmhday@wfmh.com). The materials can be downloaded from the WFMH website at [www.wfmh.com](http://www.wfmh.com), and are available in English, French and Spanish.
- 11<sup>th</sup> International Congress of the International Federation of Psychiatric Epidemiology, 3-6 may 2007, for more information visit the Web Page [www.congrex.se/ifpe2007](http://www.congrex.se/ifpe2007)

Information on the Mental Health Department of WHO (Geneva) can be found at: [www.who.int/mental\\_health/en/](http://www.who.int/mental_health/en/)