

WORLD HEALTH DAY 2017

# Depression Let's talk

CAMPAIGN ESSENTIALS

## Campaign at a glance

World Health Day, celebrated on 7 April every year to mark the anniversary of the founding of the World Health Organization, provides us with a unique opportunity to mobilize action around a specific health topic of concern to people all over the world.

**The theme of our 2017 World Health Day campaign is depression.**

Depression affects people of all ages, from all walks of life, in all countries. It causes mental anguish and impacts on people's ability to carry out even the simplest everyday tasks, with sometimes devastating consequences for relationships with family and friends and the ability to earn a living.

At worst, depression can lead to suicide, now the second leading cause of death among 15-29-year-olds.

Yet, depression can be prevented and treated. A better understanding of what depression is, and how it can be prevented and treated, will help reduce the stigma associated with the condition, and lead to more people seeking help.



### Questions?

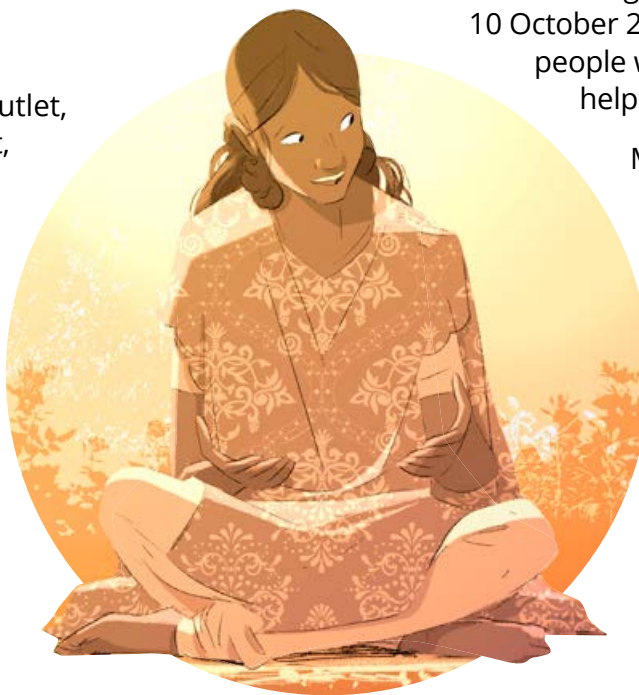
If you have any questions about the campaign, we would love to hear from you.

Send an email to [whd17@who.int](mailto:whd17@who.int) and we will get back to you as soon as we can.

## This guide is for you

If you are reading this campaign guide, you are probably interested in getting involved in the campaign. That's great, because achieving campaign goals will only be possible if we work together.

Whether you work for the government, a nongovernmental organization or a media outlet, whether you are a doctor, teacher, journalist, blogger, parent or simply someone who has heard about the campaign and would like to get involved, this guide is for you.



## What we are trying to achieve

The overall goal of this one-year campaign, beginning on 10 October 2016, World Mental Health Day, is that more people with depression, in all countries, seek and get help.

More specifically, we are aiming to achieve the following:

- the general public is better informed about depression, its causes and possible consequences, including suicide, and what help is or can be available for prevention and treatment;
- people with depression seek help; and
- family, friends and colleagues of people living with depression are able to provide support.

## What is depression?

Depression is an illness characterized by persistent sadness and a loss of interest in activities that you normally enjoy, accompanied by an inability to carry out daily activities, for at least two weeks.

In addition, people with depression normally have several of the following symptoms:

- a loss of energy;
- a change in appetite;
- sleeping more or less;
- anxiety;
- reduced concentration;
- indecisiveness;
- restlessness;
- feelings of worthlessness, guilt, or hopelessness; and
- thoughts of self-harm or suicide.



## The campaign core

At the core of the campaign is the importance of talking about depression as a vital component of recovery. The stigma surrounding mental illness, including depression, remains a barrier to people seeking help throughout the world.

Talking about depression, whether with a family member, friend or medical professional; in larger groups, for example in schools, the workplace and social settings; or in the public domain, in the news media, blogs or on social media, helps break down this stigma, ultimately leading to more people seeking help.



## The slogan

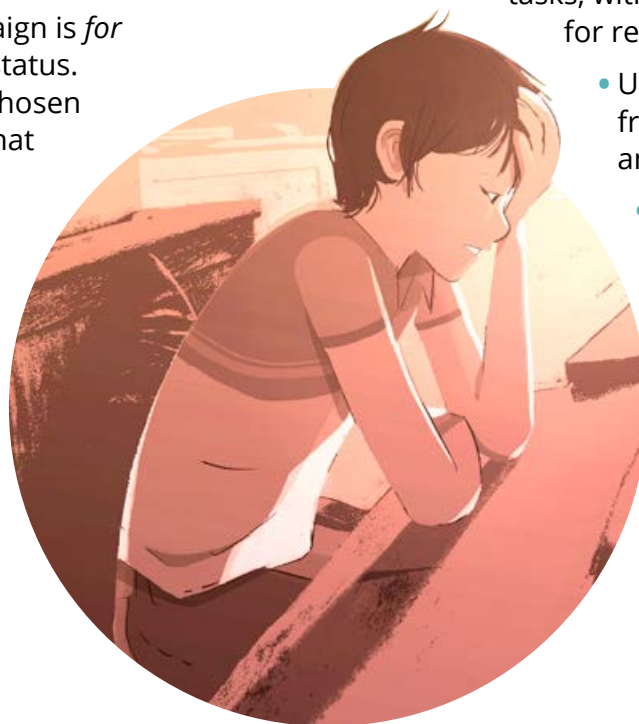
The campaign slogan is: **Depression: let's talk.**

## Who we are targeting

Depression can affect anyone. So this campaign is *for* everyone, whatever your age, sex, or social status. At the World Health Organization, we have chosen to pay particular attention to three groups that are disproportionately affected: adolescents and young adults, women of childbearing age (particularly following childbirth), and older adults (over 60s). Materials targeting these audiences are available in the campaign materials.

## Overarching messages

- Depression is a common mental disorder that affects people of all ages, from all walks of life, in all countries.



- The risk of becoming depressed is increased by poverty, unemployment, life events such as the death of a loved one or a relationship break-up, physical illness and problems caused by alcohol and drug use.
- Depression causes mental anguish and can impact on people's ability to carry out even the simplest everyday tasks, with sometimes devastating consequences for relationships with family and friends.
- Untreated depression can prevent people from working and participating in family and community life.
- At worst, depression can lead to suicide.
- Depression can be effectively prevented and treated. Treatment usually involves either a talking therapy or antidepressant medication or a combination of these.
- Overcoming the stigma often associated with depression will lead to more people getting help.
- Talking with people you trust can be a first step towards recovery from depression.

## How you can get involved

### Use and adapt our campaign materials

We have developed a set of posters and handouts to get the campaign started.

### Posters

Each poster depicts a conversation between two people about depression: a mother and daughter; a mother with her young baby and a health-care worker; a student and teacher; two men at work; and an older woman with a younger woman. Cultural variations are in development for each scenario as well as versions of the posters in Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish.

The posters can be downloaded [here](#).



## Handouts

The handouts produced for the campaign are intended to provide initial information on depression and to increase understanding of the condition, and of how it can be prevented and treated.

These are the handouts that you can use for your campaign activities:

- Depression: what you should know
- Living with someone with depression?
- Worried that your child is depressed?
- Worried about the future? Preventing depression during your teens and twenties
- Wondering why your new baby is not making you happy?
- Staying positive and preventing depression as you get older
- Do you know someone who may be considering suicide?
- Do you feel like life is not worth living?

Please note that WHO-branded materials should be used as is. For questions on use of the materials, please send an email to [whd17@who.int](mailto:whd17@who.int).



Each handout is being produced in **Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian** and **Spanish**.

Think about where campaign materials can be made available to reach people for whom they are intended. A few ideas are: health-care centres, doctors' surgeries, clinics, hospitals, schools, colleges and universities, supermarkets, leisure and social clubs, associations, places of work, places of worship, and public transport.

## Organize an activity

Organizing an activity or event is a great way to raise awareness about depression and stimulate action, both among individuals, and on a wider scale. If you do decide to organize an event, keep in mind the following:

- What are you trying to achieve?
- Who are you targeting?
- What would make your target audiences want to participate?
- When and where will your activity be held?
- Should you join up with other organizations?
- Who will you invite? Are there any well-known figures who could help you achieve your goals?
- Do you have the resources to achieve your goals? If not, how can you mobilize them?
- How will you promote your event?
- Can the media help you achieve your goals? If so, which media should you target?



- How will you share information about your activities after the event?
- How will you measure success?

Examples of activities that you might want to consider are: discussion forums, sporting events, workshops for journalists, art competitions, coffee mornings, concerts, sponsored activities – anything that contributes to a better understanding of depression and how it can be prevented and treated.

Think about involving your organization's champions, especially if they are influential among those you are trying to reach.

As this is a one-year campaign, activities can be organized throughout the year. However, we encourage you to consider organizing activities on World Health Day, 7 April 2017. Media attention is high on this day, which can generate greater awareness.



## Information about depression

If you are organizing an activity, or developing your own campaign materials, here are some facts and figures that you might want to use:

- Common mental disorders are increasing worldwide. Between 1990 and 2013, the number of people suffering from depression and/or anxiety increased by nearly 50%. Close to 10% of the world's population is affected by one or both of these conditions. Depression alone accounts for 10% of years lived with disability globally.
- In humanitarian emergencies and ongoing conflict as many as 1 in 5 people are affected by depression and anxiety.
- Depression increases the risk of other noncommunicable diseases, such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease. In addition, diseases such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease increase the risk of depression.
- Depression in women following childbirth can affect the development of newborns.
- In many countries of the world, there is no, or very little, support available for people with mental health disorders. Even in high-income countries, nearly 50% of people with depression do not get treatment.
- Lack of treatment for common mental disorders has a high economic cost: new evidence from a study led by WHO shows that depression and anxiety disorders cost the global economy more than US\$ 1 trillion each year.
- The most common mental health disorders can be prevented and treated, at relatively low cost.




## Share information and materials on social media

Throughout the campaign we will be communicating via our social media channels:

 <https://www.facebook.com/WHO/>

 [@WHO](https://twitter.com/who)

 <https://www.youtube.com/c/who>

 <https://www.instagram.com/who/@worldhealthorganization>

The primary hashtag that we are using for the campaign is #LetsTalk but look out for posts using #depression and #mentalhealth as well.

We encourage you to share our posts with your own networks, share your own materials and join discussions on issues related to the campaign.

 LetsTalk

 depression

 mentalhealth

# Resources for journalists

If you are a journalist interested in covering issues relating to depression, here are a couple of ideas to get you started:

- Find out about the prevalence of depression and what services are available in your country.
- What is the perception of depression in your country? Are perceptions changing?
- Which organizations are involved in activities for better mental health? In which areas have they been successful? What are the challenges?

Reach out to government information offices, the WHO office and other organizations working in the mental health field in your country.



Here are some resources to get you started:

## WHO's Mental Health Atlas

Brings together data from around the world to give a picture of resources available for mental health in countries, and how these resources are evolving over time.

**English**

Executive summary available in **Arabic Chinese English French Russian Spanish**

## WHO's MiNDbank.

Provides access to national policies, strategies and laws on mental health and substance abuse by country.

**English**

**Mental Health Action Plan 2013-2020**

Adopted at the World Health Assembly, the Plan serves as a guide for improvement of mental health services around the world in the period to 2020. It includes objectives, progress indicators and proposed actions for governments, international and national partners and WHO.

[English](#) [French](#) [Italian](#) [Japanese](#) [Spanish](#)

**WHO Mental Health Gap Action Programme (mhGAP)**

mhGAP aims to help authorities scale up services for mental, neurological and substance use disorders, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. The mhGAP Intervention Guide for use in non-specialized health settings is a core resource of the programme. Developed for health-care workers providing care to people with mental health-care disorders, it provides evidence-based recommendations on care for specific disorders, including depression.

**Version 2.0:** [English](#)

**Version 1.0** [Arabic](#) [English](#) [French](#) [Japanese](#) [Persian](#) [Portuguese](#) [Spanish](#)

**Background paper developed for World Bank/WHO event  
“Out of the shadows: making mental health a global  
development priority**

Includes: the case for investing in mental health; dealing with common mental disorders; treatment settings and integration; and resource gaps, funding options and proposals for the future.

[English](#)

**Scaling up treatment of depression and anxiety:  
a global return on investment analysis**

Published in The Lancet Psychiatry, April 2016

[English](#)

**WHO fact sheet on depression**

[Arabic](#) [English](#) [Chinese](#) [French](#) [Russian](#) [Spanish](#)

**Videos**

[I had a black dog, his name was depression](#)

[Living with a black dog](#)

[Making mental health a global development priority](#)

**Infographics**

The health and economic benefits of investing in mental health

[English](#) [Spanish](#)