



ICPCM Newsletter – August 2016

Progress towards a global movement for person-centered medicine: building on the 9th Geneva Conference on Person-Centered Medicine

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In April 2016, the International College of Person-Centered Medicine held its 9th Geneva Conference. This meeting ground for like-minded people who believe that medicine must be *'of the person, for the person, by the person, and with the person'* is year by year increasing its reach and supporting the development of a global movement to reorient how we think about and practice healthcare to bring people truly to the centre.

Working as a global movement to further person-centered medicine is critical as we live in a time of globalization. Not only do public health issues such as infectious diseases cross boundaries but there is movement and migration of people, ideas and cultures from country to country and many national health systems are impacted on by health policies that are developed at the regional or global levels.

The benefits of a global movement are that when people and organisations are connected there is the opportunity to share ideas, best practices and resources as well as give support and encouragement. This exchange of knowledge about person-centered medicine does not necessarily transfer from more developed to less developed contexts; sometimes the most innovative approaches occur in the most challenging settings and need not be expensive or time-consuming. Take, for example, the approaches to empowering people by providing them with access to or ownership of their personal health records. This can take the form of highly sophisticated electronic health records or simple paper records. The key to the person-centeredness is not the technology but the ability to access and understand the information and to be able to ask questions and be listened to and supported in shared decision-making in order to make informed and appropriate decisions about your health and healthcare.

As we look back at the most recent conference, there was diverse geographical participation with attendees from all regions of the world including Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Malawi, the Netherlands, Norway, Nigeria, Peru, the Philippines, Thailand, the United Kingdom and the United States.

The theme of the Conference of '*Person-Centered Integrated Care through the Life Course*' provided the opportunity to highlight the unique issues which face people as they go through different stages of their lives. Health professionals, academics, policy-makers and patients shared their research, knowledge and insights into how to achieve person-centered integrated care at each stage. The Conference promoted stimulating debate and exchange of ideas and will, no doubt, as it has previously result in new collaborative initiatives between participants and with the ICPCM.

As participants go back to their own countries, institutions and lives, they can feel part of a growing global movement. This unique forum welcomes all interested parties no matter what their academic, professional or personal background to participate in an inclusive, open and engaging way which leads to new ideas and innovations in how we think about and integrate our approaches to health and well-being into our professional and personal lives.

Many Conference participants are already members of ICPCM either individually or through their institutions. We hope others will wish to become members and will contact the secretariat for information on how to join. Being a member provides access to resources and the opportunity to share and exchange knowledge and to work with others to further the development of and practice of person-centered medicine through ICPCM's initiatives.

Activities and resources

ICPCM Journal – Now on volume six and with 21 editions to date, this is an important vehicle for sharing up to date research and academic thinking on person-centered medicine issues. Submissions are welcomed.

Declarations – One of the legacies of the ICPCM Conferences and Congresses are the Declarations which distill the scientific debate and discussions into focussed calls to action based on the academic evidence. These are developed with input from participants and are now available on a range of topics including health research, health education, interdisciplinary care, chronic disease and primary care. These can be a resource in our work to articulate and promote person-centered medicine.

Work Groups and Initiatives – The ICPCM is working on a number of specific initiatives including person-centered diagnosis, the development of a global research network, a range of books (the first book, entitled *Person Centered Psychiatry*, will be published in August 2016), a person-centered network in Latin America and person-centered clinical care guiding principles.

Conferences and Congresses – Nothing is as useful as face to face exchange of knowledge and the opportunity for dialogue and discussion. The next ICPCM event will be the 4th International Congress of Person Centered Medicine in collaboration with the Universidad Francisco de Vitoria. With a theme of '*Person Centered Medical Education and the Goals of Health Care*' it will be held from 7-9 November 2016 in Madrid, Spain. We look forward to seeing you there!

We look forward to working with current and new members to continue to grow the person-centered medicine movement in the coming years.

1. ICPCM Journal <http://www.ijpcm.org>
2. ICPCM Declarations <http://www.personcenteredmedicine.org>