

10th Geneva Conference on Person Centered Medicine, May 2017

Summary Report

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The 10th annual Conference on Person Centered Medicine was organized by the International College of Person Centered Medicine and held at Geneva University Hospital and the World Health Organization Headquarters on 8-10 May 2017, preceded by one day institutional workmeetings on the 7th. The main theme of the conference was *Celebrating Ten Years of Promoting Healthy Lives and Well-Being for All*.

As in previous years, the conference was formally co-sponsored by the World Health Organization, the World Medical Association, the World Organization of Family Doctors, the International Council of Nurses, the International Alliance of Patients' Organizations and thirty other global health professional and academic institutions. The organizing committee was composed of the ICPCM Board members, Prof. George Christodoulou as program director and Dr. Eugenio Villar as WHO representative. Material support was provided by the World Medical Association, the World Health Organization, the Geneva University Hospital, and the Paul Tournier Association.

As this was the tenth annual conference, the many milestones through the years of this programmatic initiative were discussed throughout the conference. The main successes, apart of being able to organize consistently ten annual conferences, have been to establish a Journal (*International Journal on Person Centered Medicine*) and to publish a textbook on *Person Centered Psychiatry*. In addition, every Geneva Conference and our more recent International Congresses have issued a thematic Declaration and published them, accompanied by an academic paper, in our *Journal* and institutional website. As a new development, our website now includes and archives a monthly Newsletter written by Board members and edited by Prof. Sandra van Dulmen.

The Pre-Conference Meetings

This was a full preconference day of work focused on institutional and research issues. These include the Person-centered Integrative Diagnosis (PID) model, a work that has been ongoing for some years led by a group of psychiatrists of the College and now is being extended to general medicine. The PID model is being turned into

practical tools, particularly in Latin America. Another topic, the Guiding Principles for Person Centered Health Care, is still in progress. A draft was presented, which is due to be finalized with full references towards publication.

The project on systematic conceptualization of person centered medicine and the development and validation of a Person Centered Care Index is an initiative that has crystallized well. It has gone through critical literature reviews and broad international Delphi consultations and tested afterwards. The work ahead is to increase the knowledge of the tool and to get it implemented more widely.

Other matters for discussions were of more institutional character, i.e., networks on nursing, mental health, public health, research as well as various regional networks.

Last on the agenda were discussions on publication. The newly published book on Person Centered Psychiatry was celebrated. It is clear that the publisher, Springer, considers this as a success and wishes to continue the collaboration with the College on other books. The discussions moved to a new book with the working title of Person Centered Medicine & Health. The group accepted to bring this forward and to establish an editorial team.

The Core Conference

The first two days of the core conference were held at Geneva University Hospital and consisted of plenary presentations and up to three parallel sessions. Every session had two chairs that secured lively discussions on the topics of the sessions. This report will not go into the details of the sessions but some highlights will be mentioned. The conference booklet, produced in both printed and electronic versions, contains the abstracts of the presentations.



LtoR: Drs. E.Villar, G. Christodoulou, M. Botbol, I. Sallum, K. Desai, J. Appleyard, T. Ghebrehiwet, and J.E. Mezzich at the Opening of the 10th Geneva Conference

The conference started on the 8th with addresses of the President of the College, Prof. Jim Appleyard, the Vice-rector of Geneva University, Prof. Denis Hochstrasser, the president of the World Medical Association, Prof. Ketan Desai, Dr. Eugenio Villar from the World Health Organization and the 10th Geneva Conference Program Director, Prof. George Christodoulou.

The first plenary session was intended to cover the main topics of the first ten years; building health promotions (Georges Christodoulou), constructing roads to euthymia and well-being (Robert Cloninger), striving for health and well-being through the life course (Jim Appleyard) as well as to discuss the collaborative building of Person Centered Medicine (Juan Mezzich) and the WHO contribution to people-centered healthy lives (Eugenio Villar). As this session was guiding the conference from the past to the future, a more detailed account of the presentation is hereby given:

George Christodoulou the Program Director of this conference gave historical information on ancient medicine and the WHO progressive definition on health. He stressed the importance of promoting health as well as treating diseases and how to address important risk factors with examples of the anti-war movements in psychiatry. The holistic approach to promotion of health is important as well as be aware of the cost benefit issues, not least in communication with politicians.

Robert Cloninger professor in psychiatry and great contributor to PCM reminded the participants of the importance of person centeredness and the importance of self awareness. In addressing the growing evidence since 2008, he introduced the three dimensional Character Cube: Self directedness, Cooperativeness and Self Transcendence. These are extremely important component for well-being and happiness. There is however an emerging crisis due to increasing burn out of doctors. An increased focus on person centeredness could provide some answer to this issue.

Jim Appleyard President of the ICPCM addressed life course with examples from the development of a child and the importance of early life factors as risks for chronic diseases in adulthood and the interventions that are possible already in early infancy.

Juan Mezzich the Secretary General and CEO of the ICPCM reviewed the collaborative building of the Person Centered Medicine initiative pointing to the importance of international organizations such as the WPA and WMA but also of governmental association, primarily the WHO. The fact that the World Health Report of 2008 by the World Health Assembly focused in some aspect on people centered care. He explained the formation of the ICPCM and the fact that so many associations and universities joined in from the beginning and have since increased in number. Lastly he mentioned some important work of the ICPCM, as follows:

- The development and validation of the Person centered Care Index with eight broad categories,
- The person-centered diagnostic approach in psychiatry.

- The International Journal of Person Centered Medicine

The last presenter of this session, *Eugenio Villar* from the WHO reflected on this agency's contributions to people centered healthy lives. He pointed out that we can learn from indigenous peoples and their holistic views of life. The milestones of the WHO can be considered the first definition on health, the Alma Ata conference 1978 on primary health care which still is its theoretical cornerstone, renewed in 2008 including the concept of people centered care. A third important milestone for health is the report on social determinants on health (Rio 2011). At last he pointed to the way ahead for PCM and people centered health, the two sides of the coin, based on partnership and in need to be understood globally.

The extremely important WHO program of Sustainable Developmental Goals (SDG) was discussed in the next plenary session. This program is intended to cover some overarching goals of all countries of the world instead of focusing on the low income countries as the previous Millennium Goal had been established for. There is also more of a person centeredness in this program exemplified by the attention to individual health and well-being in various ways.

The first speaker, *Maria Neira* from the WHO described the public health perspectives of SDG, a universal plan of action until 2030. Good health is a precondition for, and an outcome and indicator of, sustainable development. The health of individuals and populations is determined partly by the effectiveness of health systems, but is also influenced by, and contributes to, progress towards most social, economic and environmental goals.

The second speaker, *Jon Snaedal* then an advisor to the board of the ICPCM addressed primarily one of the 17 overarching goals of the SDG, the one on Good Health and Well Being. This goal includes thirteen different targets to be met by each nation in the world. Even though many of the goals can be reached by political and public health means, some must be directed to individuals as well such as to decrease substance abuse and to increase wellbeing.

The last speaker, *Werdie van Staden* drew attention to the connection between Person Centered Medicine (PCM) and the human rights underpinning of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). Some of the human rights as articulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations in 1948 can serve as support for PCM. Examples relate to the recognition of being a legal person; dignity of the person; liberty and freedom; a standard of living adequate for health and well-being including food, clothing and housing; protection of privacy, honour, reputation, and a right to work; a cultured life in the community; and sharing in scientific advances. These human rights may be worked on as a rights-informed pursuit of PCM.

The remaining of the first day had two parallel sessions addressing person centered practice of various medical specialties and in various health disciplines, person

centered care of refugees and immigrants and person centered management of health consequences of disasters.

The second day of the conference started by a plenary session on Integrated Health Systems with three eminent presentations from the WHO, the CIOMS and the ICPCM.

Ann-Lise Guisset from the WHO stressed that over 400 million people lack access to essential health services that could be delivered through primary care. Money is not necessarily the answer; between 20 and 40 % of spending is wasted through inefficiency. The framework for integrated people centred health services is being adopted around the world; China will lead a session at the WHA demonstrating some progress in this area. WHO is developing position papers and practice briefs on subjects such as the relationship between hospitals and primary care. A generalist physician should co-ordinate the health care team for the patient in the hospital.

Cherian Varghese, also from the WHO, spoke of the importance to combat Non Communicable Disease (NCD) by strengthening and re-orienting health systems. Multimorbidity is similar to approaching the various parts of the elephant but not seeing the animal as a whole. Conflicting medical advice, adverse drug events, duplicate lab tests, poor compliance with meds, poor functional status, high mortality, and unnecessary hospitalizations are the result of a siloed approach to NCDs. The existing work force may not be adequately trained in NCD care. Depression is the single most common and important co-morbidity. Implementation science is useful, but Ghandi said it best: *Be the change you want to see in the world.*

Robert Cloninger told the audience that we need a slogan similar to Lincoln and the Gettysburg Address; care for, by and of the person. Intrinsic dignity of all human being and moral universalism provide the underpinnings of PHC. There is a relationship between income inequity and health and social problems.

Are selfish people healthy? They reject duty to others, reject evidence of climate change. But individuals well being is reduced in the absence of collective well being. The struggle to be on top is stressful which is unhealthy in the absence of a social safety net. Evolutionary basis of co-operation for survival may be another explanation.

Herve Le Louet from the CIOMS described the institution, a NGO created by WHO and UNESCO including 50 international member organisations, academies of sciences. It promotes international activities in the field of biomedical sciences.

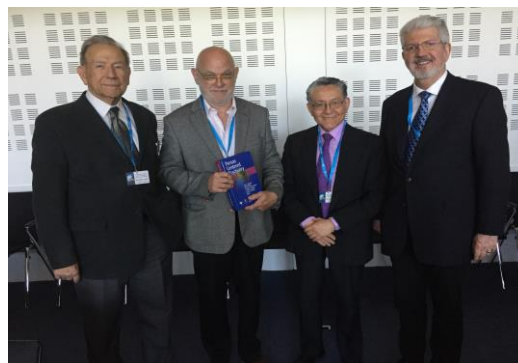
The institution is interested in bioethics and drug safety including adverse drug reactions, safety in clinical trials, vaccine safety surveillance, risk minimization for medicinal products, guidelines for ethical guidelines for health related research, and drug induced liver injury. It uses social media for reporting.

The book on the Person Centered Psychiatry, published in December 2016 was the main topic of the next plenary session. Springer, the publisher has shown interest in continuing the relationship with the ICPCM based on the success of this book. In the session, the book's editors and some of its contributors described its content and discussed the main topics.

During the remainder of the second day parallel sessions on various topics were held, addressing ethical issues, education, clinical communication and coaching, research and health care, all with main focus on person centeredness.

The Paul Tournier Prize

The highlight of the third conference day, held at the WHO headquarters in Geneva, was the Paul Tournier Prize session, focusing on the legacy of the late Paul Tournier a founder of the concept of person centered medicine in modern times. Representatives from the Paul tournier Association and from the Tournier family were present and the first recipient of the prize, Wim van Lerberghe gave his prize lecture.



[L]Plaque of the Paul Tournier Prize and [R]Prize winner Prof. Wim Van Lerberghe [2nd from L] holding a copy of the Person Centered Psychiatry book accompanied by editors G. Christodoulou, J.E. Mezzich and C.R. Cloninger.

A special session on WHO global programs was organized and a separate session focused on the road ahead.

The General Assembly

According to the bylaws of the College, a General Assembly was held at the end of the first day of the conference. A draft to the 2017 Geneva Declaration named “*Ten Years Promoting Healthy Lives and Well-being for All*” had been prepared by a group led by George Christodoulou and Robert Cloninger. The draft was discussed and the Assembly subsequently gave the Board the mandate to finalize the draft in the coming weeks.

The Board was up for election, two Board members did not stand for re-election, Jo Groves, a former representative of the International Alliance of Patients’ Organizations and the outgoing president, Jim Appleyard. The latter was however elected as a special advisor to the Board, a role that had been activated for some time. Both received thanks for their valuable contribution during the last years. Two new Board Members were elected, Wim van Lerberghe, a senior officer of the WHO until recently and Helen Millar, a psychiatrist from Dundee in Scotland.

The Assembly elected Prof. Jon Snaedal from Reykjavik, Iceland as president for the coming two years. He has been active since the beginning of the PCM movement, coming in as a representative of the World Medical Association and a former President of that Association.



A group of participants in a session at the World Health Organization headquarters

Post-conference Survey

After the conference, a survey was made amongst the participants. Even though the response rate was low, it clearly shows that the participants value highly the academic content of the presentations as everyone rated it as either excellent or substantial. Among the best features appeared to be good overall conference organization, comprehensive program, advancing the ethos of person-centeredness, scientifically sound presentations, joint sessions with WHO, good reviews of PCM advances, specific plans for the future, engaging a group of nurses, collegial atmosphere, and

fruitful interactions among participants.

The least valuable features included sessions not starting on time, scheduled time of presentations not well kept, long work days and some presentations not quite focused on or relevant to PCM.

Among the frequent suggestions to improve future Geneva Conferences were that sessions should start punctually, increase the promotion of the conference through the internet, engaging more students, giving answers to specific clinical problems and health population needs, greater research base for the presentations, guiding future presenters on relevance to PCM, more information on presenters, more round table discussions, engaging the audience widely in discussions, more opportunities for networking, and more information on moderately priced hotels.

All of these remarks are of great value for the College for the planning of coming events.

The Way Forward

In light of the successes of the last ten years, the way ahead looks bright but will not be realized without a continuous commitment of the Board and important partners. The 5th International Congress of Person Centered Medicine is now being planned and will take place in Zagreb in Croatia October 23-25 at the Westin Hotel located centrally in town. The main theme is Cancer and Person Centered Medicine featuring many prominent experts from Croatia as well as international speakers.

The first steps in the planning of the 11th Geneva Conference have been taken and the dates have already been decided on: April 8-11th 2018. The proposed theme is Person Centered Women's Health and this could be extended in reference to collaboration with new WHO developments. The Board will continue to work on specific topics as was decided in the preconference in Geneva and furthermore, a continuous collaboration with Springer Publishing Company on a book on Person Centered Medicine is highly likely just to mention a few of the initiatives that lay ahead.

As president of the International College on Person Centered Medicine and speaking on behalf of the Board, I extend my sincerest thanks to all who have contributed to the successes of the last ten years. I am looking forward to our future collaboration.