7th April 2018 World Health Day - Universal health coverage: everyone, everywhere

Psychologists say Universal health coverage (UHC) is vital as access to good quality and affordable healthcare is key to people's health and wellbeing

http://efpa.eu/news/world-health-day-april-7universal-health-coverageeveryone-everywhere-

Today is World Health Day and according to the **World Health Organisation** at least half the world's population is currently unable to obtain essential health services. Over 800 million people (almost 12 percent of the world's population) spend at least 10 percent of their household budgets on health expenses for themselves, a sick child or other family member. They incur so-called "catastrophic expenditures".

Jo Hart from the EFPA Standing Committee on Psychology and Health and Chair of the BPS Division of Health Psychology said: 'It's unacceptable that so many people in the world either have no access to healthcare due to poverty or face destitution if they need to pay for treatment. No one should have to choose between good health and other life necessities.' At the same time we should recognise the enormous achievements over the past decades where so many children have been lifted out of poverty and child mortality has fallen to its lowest level ever **Gapminder**
However, much more needs to be done. Universal Health Coverage (UHC) is not only about ensuring a minimum package of health services, but also about ensuring the progressive expansion of coverage of health services and financial protection as more resources become available. It is also not only about medical treatment for individuals, but also includes services for whole populations such as public health campaigns – for example adding fluoride to water or controlling the breeding grounds of mosquitoes that can cause disease. It is an issue of human rights as well as health.

Margarida Gaspar de Matos from the EFPA Board of Prevention and Promotion said: 'The access to essential services is not yet a reality all over the world, moreover, we must keep in mind that this is not a one directional process towards a better health: we have recently seen that facing new societal challenges, some countries indeed went backwards while e.g. facing economic recessions and wars'.

Under the leadership of the EFPA Board of Promotion and Prevention, **EFPA** has endorsed the Vienna Declaration that sets out ambitious goals for public health over the coming years and sets out a road map for the future. **The Vienna Declaration**
Improving mental health is a key objective and many European countries have been taking forward prevention work in the field of mental health. One encouraging model has been parent-training programmes that help give children a good start in life **Bringing Bowlby to caregivers worldwide**

In the UK the 'Health Psychology in Public Health Network (HPPHN), created by Professor Jim McManus shows the part that psychologists can play in this important field. The **HPPHN**

Notes to the Editor
The British Psychological Society BPS is very proud to host the **2018 European Semester of Psychology**. This creates a common space in which European psychologists can interact and communicate so as to foster the sharing and transmission of knowledge and expertise between members and, in turn, to stimulate the ongoing development of a truly European identity among psychologists across Europe.

BPS Changing behaviour briefings: Children, adolescents and screen use, Childhood nutrition, Responsible alcohol consumption. Briefings
BPS Position Statement 'Understanding and preventing suicide: a psychological perspective' Position statement