

Do we need to give up our physical health when we have a mental health problem?

Inauguration Declaration of HeAL JAPAN Initiative

We, people experiencing psychosis, their carers, citizens and mental health care professionals, agreeing with the international declaration of HeAL (Healthy Active Lives), declare today to start actions to achieve its goals in Japan.

Further extending the HeAL's principles for young people experiencing psychosis, we aim to realize the society where physical health of all people experiencing mental health problem is valued and needed supports are provided.

Leading healthy active lives both mentally and physically is one of the fundamental human rights of the people and the foundation for the development of our communities and society.

It is required to realize the society where the fundamental human right is equally protected for all people and everybody can proactively maintain and increase his/her mental and physical health.

Mental health and physical health are both inseparable and support each other; when there is a problem in either of them, the other will be affected.

The mental health crisis is at the same time the physical health crisis.

Integrated supports for both mental and physical health are indispensable to recover from the crisis.

However, until today, when people face a mental problem or crisis and try to recover from their conditions, necessary information, opportunities and supports to maintain and increase their physical health have been rarely provided. Therefore, "physical health inequalities" being faced by the people experiencing schizophrenia and other psychosis have long been neglected.

Now, we must face this long-neglected problem and take the first step to overcome.

The time has come to take concrete actions to realize the society where the right of people with a mental problem pursuing physical health is truly valued and where those people can enjoy their physical health.

We need to realize the society where, in its mental health services, all users and carers can feel, "my (my family's) physical health is truly valued".

In order for that, we promote activities to raise awareness of mental health care providers on their service users' physical health and improve their clinical practice, as well as to improve communication on physical health between the providers and users.

We also actively appeal for the necessity of research to elucidate the social and biological causes and mechanisms of "physical health inequalities" so that the importance of such research is widely accepted and a number of researchers are actively involved in this issue.

In addition to mental health care professionals, we will "raise awareness" to involve physical health care professionals and the public in achieving our aspiration.

Hoping to realize the society where people can actively maintain and increase their own mental and physical health and move forward for the recovery, we declare today to address the important issues as mentioned above.

November 20, 2014

Working Group of HeAL Japan Initiative



HeAL JAPAN Initiative