

# CCHR Says World Mental Health Day Should Address Coercion and Failures

*Psychiatric group's history of eugenics-Nazi membership requires an apology after 75 years of silence.*

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, October 9, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Citizens Commission on Human Rights International \(CCHR\)](#) says World Mental Health Day (WMHD) on October 10 should reflect upon the failures and “incidence of human rights violations in mental health care across nations” that has been described as a “global emergency,” according to the journal, Health Human Rights.[1] Mental hospitals are still racked by sexual abuse of patients, beatings, fraud, negligence, physical assault, and deaths. Every minute around the world an estimated two people are involuntarily committed, and potentially subjected to unwanted treatment, despite its risks.



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CCHR, a 54-year mental health industry watchdog, has brought this to the attention of the World Federation for Mental Health (WFMH) which conceived of Mental Health Day in 1992, funded then by a pharmaceutical company, which had recently launched its new antidepressant, fluoxetine. Today, over 100 million people take antidepressants, and approximately 1 million, or 1 in every 100, face documented side effects of violent or suicidal behavior.[2] CCHR says the failures and human rights violations should be featured on Mental Health Day.

In an email to three of WFMH’s executive strata, CCHR welcomed the group’s plan to “unravel its historical roots” during the celebration of its 75th Anniversary this year. Part of that history, CCHR details, is the former Nazi and eugenics delegates that attended the 1948 International Congress on Mental Health, from which WFMH was formed. “Current executives may not be aware of this part of the group’s history,” Jan Eastgate, CCHR’s international president said. Two

of the psychiatric delegates had actively participated in euthanasia during WWII, a practice that led to 300,000 deaths.[3] “Like other psychiatric groups and governments that have apologized for their role in Nazi medical-psychiatric programs or eugenics, the WFMH should also apologize for embracing proponents of these practices.”

Founding members included six psychiatrists who either were part of or supporters of the Nazi euthanasia or sterilization programs during WWII or were apologists for it, as detailed in an online [CCHR report](#). Of these, two—the late Friedrich Mauz and Werner Villinger—were consultants for the notorious T4 euthanasia campaign, which gave the death sentence to hundreds of thousands of people.

In 2010, Dr. Frank Schneider, president of the German Association for Psychiatry and Psychotherapy (DGPPN), broke the organization’s 70-year silence about its members' role in the Holocaust, including the selection of those to be killed and killing themselves. DGPPN formally revoked all honors the association had given Mauz saying he had evaluated the registration forms for T4 and decided who would live or die.[4]

WFMH should be transparent about those officers and founding members, now deceased, who were involved in or supported such practices, adds CCHR. All now deceased, Prof Hans Hoff from Vienna, who was WFMH president from 1959 to 1960, praised the work of Villinger. Helmuth E. Ehrhardt, who was elected to the WFMH board in 1968, had been a member of the Nazi Party and had written reports endorsing forced sterilization.[5] Adolf Meyer, an Honorary President of WFMH, co-founded and served for 12 years from 1923 to 1935 on the advisory council of the American Eugenics Society that hoped to sterilize one-tenth of the U.S. population.[6]

Psychiatrists who were co-founders of WFMH had high hopes of ending wars by reducing mental illness. One of those, Dr. G. Brock Chisholm, believed psychiatrists could induce governments to institute compulsory treatment for “neuroses as for other infectious diseases.”[7]

“Rates of suicide, anxiety, depression, addiction deaths, psychiatric prescription use—went in the wrong direction, even as access to services expanded greatly,” a New York Times reporter who had covered psychiatry and mental health for 20 years, disclosed.[8] Today, tens of millions of children and adults are being drugged with psychoactive chemicals that can cause psychosis, cardiac issues, addiction, suicide, and death.

In 2018, Stat News also reported, “There has been an expansion of psychiatric services globally over the past 35 years, which has led to a dramatic increase in the use of antidepressants and other psychiatric drugs.” At a public level, “that approach has not worked” and it has happened worldwide.[9]

- More than 24% of Americans now take psychiatric drugs, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control.[10]

- Over 15% of the UK public takes a psychiatric drug on any given day.[11] In Europe, antidepressant consumption has more than doubled in the last 20 years.[12]
- From 2011 to 2022, over half a million lives (539,810) were lost to suicide in the U.S., with 2022 showing the highest number of deaths on record, according to the Centers for Disease Control.[13]

The state of mental health has deteriorated globally, despite billions of dollars invested in it, Eastgate says, and this should be addressed on the day that is dedicated to raising awareness about mental health. "Transparency is needed about the failures and reliance upon coercive psychiatric practices that have violated human rights and damaged so many lives," she added.

She also pointed to the 75-year-old American Society of Human Genetics, which this year apologized for its past members' role in eugenics. Its president Brendan Lee stated, "How do you build trust if you don't express remorse and decry what has really gone on inappropriately in the past?"

Eastgate summarized: "While WFMH was not involved in the atrocities of euthanasia, in 1948 it accepted consultants who were. This requires public acknowledgment, especially for mental health consumer members, youth volunteers, and the World Health Organization and UN with which WFMH is affiliated."

Read CCHR's report here.

[1] Sebastian Porsdam Mann, PhD, et al., "Human Rights-Based Approaches to Mental Health," Health Human Rights, June 2016, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5070696/>

[2] <https://www.antidepressantrisks.org/>

[3] <https://www.history.co.uk/article/aktion-t4-the-nazi-euthanasia-programme-that-killed-300000>

[4] Frank Schneider, "Psychiatry under National Socialism: Remembrance and Responsibility," 2010

[5] <http://mentalhealth.faithweb.com/behindhitler/phoenix.html>

[6] <https://peoplepill.com/people/adolf-meyer-1>

[7] Leonard Kaplan, "CIVIL COMMITMENT AS YOU LIKE IT," Boston University Law Review, p. 15; <https://newswithviews.com/Cuddy/dennis33.htm>

[8] <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/01/health/mental-health-treatments.html>

[9] <https://www.statnews.com/2018/10/22/flooding-world-psychiatric-drugs-boost-burden-mental-disorders>

[10] "Pandemic Fuels Rise in Mental Health Prescriptions," Lending Tree Insurance, 6 Jan 2022

[11] J. Davies, The sedated society: The causes and harms of our psychiatric drug epidemic, Jan. 2017,  
<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317758107> The sedated society The causes and harms of our psychiatric drug epidemic

[12] <https://www.euronews.com/next/2023/09/09/europes-mental-health-crisis-in-data-which-country-uses-the-most-antidepressants>

[13] Heather Saunders, Nirmita Panchal, "A Look at the Latest Suicide Data and Change Over the Last Decade," <https://www.kff.org/mental-health/issue-brief/a-look-at-the-latest-suicide-data-and-change-over-the-last-decade/>

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