

World's Largest Civil Society Gathering on Mental Health Generates New Global and Regional Partnerships

ILOILO, PHILIPPINES, February 6, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- This week, more than 300 mental health advocates from over 70 countries gathered at the 4th Global Mental Health Advocacy Forum in the Philippines to share experiences and forge new partnerships to address mental health issues worldwide. A further 1,500 mental health activists joined the discussions online from all over the world, and live translations were provided in over 100 languages, true to the theme of the event to "leave no one behind."



The event was organised by the Global Mental Health Action Network, with local partnership from #MentalHealthPH and core support from United for Global Mental Health. In workshops and plenary sessions, the participants explored issues including how to reduce suicide rates, how to address the impacts of climate change on mental health, and how to reform mental health services to be more responsive to people's needs. They also started mapping critical topics such as

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*Dr Antonis Kousoulis,
Secretariat Lead of the
GMHAN*

□□What are the policies that need to change because they discriminate against people living with mental health conditions.

□□What systems of support can improve the mental health and life circumstances of LGBTQI+ communities.

□□What are the funding mechanisms that should be encouraged over the next few years to support mental health improvement work in a context of international aid cuts and threats to multilateralism.

Reflecting the diversity of the mental health community, the event featured speakers from almost 40 countries and participants from NGOs, grassroots activists, philanthropic donors, UN agencies representatives and private sector organisations. Young people actively led and participated in all sessions to help shape the vision of how to improve mental health now and in the future. Participants learnt practical tips to help improve their fundraising and communications efforts to help them secure vital support work.

“As advocates, we have learnt from one another and made plans to continue working with one another in partnership to improve mental health services and change mental health policies. When a passionate global community comes together, our voices become stronger. The Global Mental Health Action Network believes learning and collaboration are the most effective ways to ensure better mental health for all,” said Dr Antonis Kousoulis, Secretariat Lead of the Global Mental Health Action Network, organisers of the event hosted by United for Global Mental Health.

“We at #MentalHealthPH believe that by centering the experiences of mental health champions and youth with lived experience, we can transform the mental health systems to ones that respond to and accommodate their lived realities,” said Michael Angelo Pereira, Secretary General, #MentalHealthPH

The Forum was held in the Philippines and Southeast Asia for the first time. It was organised with the local partnership of #MentalHealthPH and also included addresses from: Senator Risa Hontiveros; Dr. Ma. Sophia S. Pulmones, Officer-in-Charge, Director IV Department of Health Western Visayas Center for Health Development; Dr Candice Magdalane Alumisin- Tupas, Executive Assistant to the Mayor for Medical Tourism and Health Initiatives, Iloilo City.

Press Notes:

For more information on the forum and its funders, see www.gmhan.org.

For more information on #MentalHealthPH, see www.mentalhealthph.org



**Global Mental Health
Action Network**

**UNITED
FOR
GLOBAL
MENTAL
HEALTH**

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