



WORLD ASSOCIATION OF
SOCIAL PSYCHIATRY

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WASP NEWSLETTER JULY 2026

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Message from the Secretary General, WASP, and the Editor, WASP Newsletter



It gives me immense pleasure to present the first issue of the WASP Newsletter for the year 2026. This issue marks the beginning of a new chapter for the World Association of Social Psychiatry following the highly successful 25th World Congress of Social Psychiatry held in Marrakesh, Morocco, from 15–17th January 2026.

The Congress, organized under the leadership of Professor Driss Moussaoui and the then WASP President, Professor Vincenzo Di Nicola, brought together members from across the globe for a rich scientific program with opportunities for learning, collaboration, and fellowship. The exchange of ideas, experiences, and cultures reaffirmed the strength of WASP as a truly global community committed to advancing the principles of social psychiatry. The Congress also marked an important transition in the leadership of our Association. Professor Rakesh Chadda was inducted as the new President, Professor Andrew Molodyski as President-Elect, Professor Rama Rao Gogineni was elected Secretary General, and Professor Yasser Khazaal was elected Treasurer. Professors Vincenzo Di Nicola and Roy Abraham Kallivayalil continue to support the Association as Advisors. We are also delighted that Dr. Gayatri Bhatia of New Delhi has joined the editorial team as Associate Editor of the WASP Newsletter.

Our new President, Professor Chadda, has already initiated efforts to update the member societies and committees of WASP, and considerable progress has been made in strengthening communication across the organization. We believe these initiatives will further enhance collaboration among member societies, promote academic exchange, and encourage greater engagement across our global network.

As we embark on this new term, let us continue to work together to advance the mission of the World Association of Social Psychiatry—promoting mental health through collaboration, scientific excellence, and an enduring commitment to the social dimensions of mental health. We look forward to serving you and thank you for your continued support of WASP.

Rama Rao Gogineni
Secretary General ,
World Association of Social Psychiatry

Editor

Rama Rao Gogineni

Associate Editor

Gayatri Bhatia

Message from the President



I am highly delighted to write a message for the first issue of the WASP Newsletter for the year 2026. The new executive committee of the WASP took over in January 2026 during the 25th World Congress held at Marrakesh with Dr Andrew Molodynski as President Elect, Dr Ram RaoGogineni as Secretary General, Dr Yasser Khazaal a Treasurer and Dr Vincenzo Di Nicola and Dr Roy Abraham and Dr Roy Abraham Kallivayalil as Presidential Advisors for the triennium of 2025-2028. Dr Pratap Sharan has taken over as the new Editor in Chief of the World Social Psychiatry, the official Journal of the WASP, after Dr Debasish Basu, the founder Editor, finished his tenure.

In the contemporary society, social psychiatry has many important responsibilities especially in the background of the societal turmoil, the world is currently going through in the last few years with many major world powers involved in wars which is having its adverse effects on menial health of the affected population. More so, increasing violence across the world, climate changes, internet addiction especially in the growing children and youth are some important challenges, the discipline of social psychiatry faces. Increasing mental health literacy especially in low- and middle-income countries is another important area where social psychiatrists need to take a lead.

WASP has over 25 member societies and affiliates representing from all over the world, and 20 specialty sections covering culture, law and ethics, mental health promotion, women, children and adolescents and old age, and many others. I would like to invite all the member societies and the speciality sections to take initiatives in undertaking academic, research and community awareness activities in their respective areas. The member societies and the specialty sections are welcome to organise scientific meetings and webinars. I would like to request the member societies and the specialty sections to share their activities in form of a brief note for the WASP Newsletter.

WASP will have its next world congress in early December 2028 at New Delhi. We will be sharing the details in the next few weeks. We also plan to have WASP International Conference in 2027 and will be sharing the details shortly.

Rakesh K Chadda
President, WASP
Professor Emeritus, National Academy of Medical Sciences (India)
Professor & Head, Department of Psychiatry,
Amrita Institute of Medical Sciences & Research Centre,
Faridabad 121002, India

Message from the President Elect



It is a real pleasure to give this first update of the new Triennium with Professor Rakesh Chadda as our new president of the WASP. It feels like an honour to be the President Elect, and I am very grateful to all those who supported me. After our Congress in Marrakesh, it is time to move on and make the changes that are necessary to prepare the WASP for the future and to ensure that it is sustainable and can grow. We are very grateful for the leadership of professor Driss Moussaoui in making the Congress in Marrakesh, which was attended by several hundred people from many different countries.

Rakesh has taken over as president of WASP and already there is a feeling of energy and change. We are currently reorganising all the sections of WASP, involving new people, and supporting many existing people. We hope to have an overarching strategy for the work of the sections and for what WASP hopes to achieve over the coming years. We are all aware that there is very much work to be done and are very much up for this challenge. One of the key challenges going forward is to increase the opportunities for people to become involved and to increase our diversity. We have a generally good geographical mix, but there are challenges with involving both genders equally in the work of WASP and with providing pathways for people earlier in their careers to be meaningfully involved. I am clear that I will be working hard on these things over the next few years both as president-elect and then from 2028 onwards as president.

Andrew Molodynsky

President Elect, WASP

Consultant Psychiatrist, Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust

Honorary Senior Clinical Lecturer, Oxford University

Deputy National Speciality Lead for Mental Health, NIHR CRN

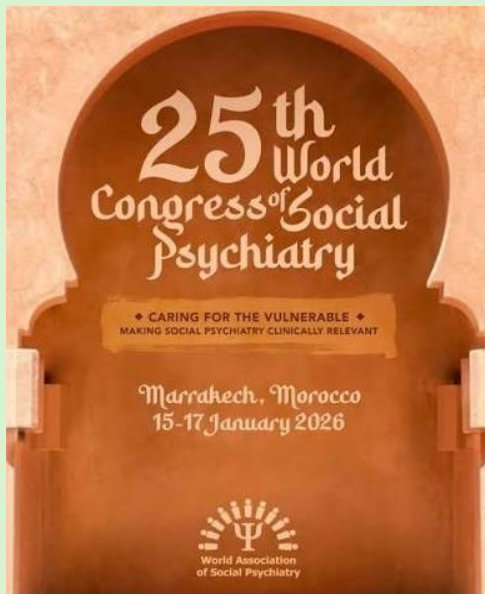
National mental health lead, British Medical Association Consultant Committee

Report on 25th World Congress of Social Psychiatry

Theme: Caring for the Vulnerable: Making Social Psychiatry Clinically Relevant

Bringing together clinicians, researchers, educators, and mental health advocates from across the globe, the 25th World Congress of Social Psychiatry reaffirmed WASP's enduring commitment to advancing social psychiatry through scientific excellence, international collaboration, and cultural exchange.

Held in Marrakech, Morocco, from 15–17 January 2026, the Congress was organized under the leadership of Professor Vincenzo Di Nicola and Professor Rakesh Chadda as Congress Co-Presidents, Professor Driss Moussaoui, President of the National Organizing Committee, and Mr. Mustapha Asri, Professional Congress Organizer. Together, they delivered a highly successful scientific meeting centered on the theme, "Caring for the Vulnerable: Making Social Psychiatry Clinically Relevant." The Congress brought together members of the WASP Executive Committee, several Past Presidents, and representatives from national social psychiatry associations across Austria, Canada, Germany, India, Italy, Switzerland, Morocco, Pakistan, and the United States, providing a vibrant platform for scientific exchange, professional fellowship, and discussions on the future direction of WASP.



Reports from member societies reflected the continued growth and vitality of social psychiatry worldwide. Professor Widad Mazhar Malik highlighted the Pakistan Association's expanding membership, regular academic meetings, and informative newsletter, while expressing a strong desire for greater engagement with WASP. Professor Rama Rao Gogineni reported continued growth of the American Association for Social Psychiatry, with a new Executive Committee to be constituted following the American Psychiatric Association meeting. Professor Debasish Basu noted that social psychiatry remains highly active in India, while Professor Giovanni Martinotti described the success of the Italian Association's November 2025 conference, attended by approximately 1,500 delegates. Professor Johannes Wancata shared that the Austrian Association continues to attract around 300 participants annually and expressed interest in co-hosting future WASP academic meetings.

Professor Driss Moussaoui reflected on the continued development and rich history of social psychiatry in Morocco, Professor Yasser Khazaal reported that the Swiss Association remains active with nearly 700 members, and Professor Vincenzo DiNicola noted that although the Canadian Association had held few national meetings during the last triennium, it remained active through national and international collaborations. Professor Maria Ammon reaffirmed the long-standing partnership between the World Association for Dynamic Psychiatry (WADP) and WASP, highlighting over six decades of collaboration through mutual co-sponsorship of international congresses. Professor Gabby Ivbijaro also shared encouraging progress in the development of the West African Association affiliated with WASP.

The Congress also marked the beginning of a new leadership term for the Association. Professor Rakesh Chadda assumed office as President of WASP, Professor Andrew Molodynski as President-Elect, Professor Rama Rao Gogineni as Secretary General, and Professor Yasser Khazaal was re-elected Treasurer for a second triennium. Professor Chadda also proposed expanding the Executive Committee to strengthen representation from member countries and promote greater gender balance, while Professor Andrew Molodynski outlined plans to review the WASP Statutes during the coming triennium to enhance participation, inclusivity, and the Association's global reach.

A memorable highlight of the Congress was the presentation of the Yves Pelicier Prize to Professor Dinesh Bhugra. In a remarkable gesture, Professor Bhugra announced that he would donate the prize money to the Geo Psychiatry Institute, Switzerland, becoming the first recipient of the Yves Pelicier Prize to dedicate the award to an academic institution. His generosity was warmly applauded by delegates and reflected the spirit of service and international collaboration that characterized the Congress. Reflecting WASP's commitment to inclusivity, 75 members of the Profamille groups from Morocco and France and 10 early-career psychiatrists were supported through registration fee waivers, encouraging broader participation in the Congress. Professor Driss Moussaoui also reported that the meeting was expected to generate a modest financial surplus for both the Moroccan Psychiatric Association and WASP, underscoring the successful organization of the Congress.

Looking ahead, delegates warmly welcomed the announcement that the 26th World Congress of Social Psychiatry will be hosted in New Delhi, India, from 2–5 December 2028, under the leadership of WASP President Professor Rakesh Chadda. Building on the success of Marrakech, the global WASP community now looks forward to reconvening in New Delhi in 2028 for another landmark World Congress dedicated to advancing the principles and practice of social psychiatry.

Vincenzo Di Nicola
Driss Moussaoui
Rakesh Chadda

WASP Specialty Sections

The World Association of Social Psychiatry (WASP) has 20 specialty sections, each dedicated to a specific area of social psychiatry. Every section is led by a Chair, Co-Chair, and Secretary and includes members from different regions of the world, promoting collaboration and the exchange of knowledge and diverse perspectives.

The sections organize symposia, webinars, and other academic activities, while contributing to WASP initiatives, international meetings, and World Congresses. Members are encouraged to publish their research and viewpoints in *World Social Psychiatry*, the official journal of WASP, and the WASP Newsletter. In collaboration with the WASP Executive Committee, sections may also develop consensus statements and position papers.

Each section may comprise up to 10 members from across the world. Office bearers serve a three-year term, with the possibility of re-election or reappointment. We warmly invite members to join the specialty sections and contribute to advancing education, research, and international collaboration in social psychiatry.

WASP Specialty Sections (2025-28)

- **WASP Section on Recovery**
Chair: Shiro Suda (Japan)
Co-Chair: Mazhar Malik (Pakistan)
Secretary: Emily Kaye (UK)
- **WASP Section on Family Intervention Programs**
Chair: Saïd Fattah (France)
Co-Chair: Yann Hodé (France)
Secretary: Wydad Hikmat (Morocco)
- **WASP Section on Human Rights and Decision Making in Psychiatry**
Chairs: Domenico Giacco (UK)
Emanuele Valenti (UK)
- **WASP Section on Preventive Psychiatry**
Chair: Johannes Wancata (Austria)
Co-Chair: UC Garg (India)
Secretary: Lamia Jouini (Tunisia)
- **WASP Section on Suicide prevention**
Chair: Aida Mihajlovic (USA)
Co-Chair: Jayan Mendis (Sri Lanka)
- **WASP Section on Migration and Mental Health**
Chair: Farooq Mohyuddin (USA)
Co-chair: Neeraj Gill (Australia)
Secretary: Joffrey Quiring (Philippines)
- **WASP Section on Primary Care Mental Health**
Chair: Gabriel Ivbijaro (UK)
Co-Chair: Vincenzo Di Nicola (Canada)
- **WASP Women Section**
Chair: Alejandra Maddocks (Argentina)
Co-Chair: Louise Penzenstadler (Switzerland)
Secretary: Nishtha Chawla (India)
- **WASP Section on Substance Use**
Chair: Anju Dhawan (India)
Co-chair: Joseph El Khouri (UAE)
Secretary: Vinit Patel (India)
- **WASP Section on Behavioural Addictions**
Chair: Luigi Janiri (Italy)
Co-chair: Siddharth Sarkar (India)
- **WASP Section on Digital Mental Health and Artificial Intelligence**
Chair: Nikos Christodoulou (Greece)
Co-Chair: Koushik Sinha Deb (India)
Secretary: Maria Carandang (Philippines)
- **WASP Section on Dynamic Psychiatry**
Chair: Hachem Tyal (Morocco)
Co-chair: Maria Ammon (Germany)
Secretary: Snehil Gupta (India)
- **WASP Section on Culture and Mental Health**
Chair: Swaran Preet Singh (UK)
Secretary: Vaibhav Patil (India)
- **WASP Section on Early Career Psychiatrists**
Chair: Soumitra Das (Australia)
Co-Chair: Nivedita Sudheer (India)
Widad Malik (Pakistan)
Advisor: Maria Carandang (Philippines)
- **WASP Section on Child and Adolescent Mental Health**
Chair: Eugenio Rothe (USA)
Co-Chair: Varghese P. Punnoose (India)
Secretary: Mahadev Singh Sen (India)
- **WASP Section on Ethics and Mental Health**
Chair: Fernando Lolas Stepke (Chile)
Co-Chair: Rohit Verma (India)
- **WASP Section on Old Age Mental Health**
Chair- Antonios Politis (Egypt)
Secretary- Preethy K (India)
- **WASP Section on Mental Health Promotion**
Chair- D Basu (India)
Co-Chair: Ajay Risal (Nepal)
Secretary: Ruta Karaliuniene (Germany)
- **WASP Section on Social Psychiatry in Medical Curriculum**
Chair: Mamta Sood (India)
Co-Chair: Marinos Kyriakopoulos (UK/Greece)
Secretary: Konstantinos Tsamakias (Greece)
- **WASP Section on Mental Health Legislation**
Chair: Sonu Gaiind (Canada)
Co-Chair: Isabella D'Orta (Switzerland)

Messages from WASP Specialty Sections

WASP Section on Primary Care Mental Health

The Primary Care Mental Health and Public Health Section was established to advance WASP's vision of ensuring that social psychiatry and mental healthcare are accessible to all, irrespective of nation, socioeconomic status, gender, or ethnicity. Our section brings together members with a shared interest in primary care mental health, public health, and social psychiatry to promote collaboration and develop practical approaches that strengthen mental healthcare within communities.

As patterns of disease and the mental health needs of populations continue to evolve, we believe that closer collaboration between psychiatry, primary care, and public health has never been more important. The growing burden of non-communicable diseases, the psychological impact of epidemics and pandemics, and the global drive towards universal health coverage highlight the need for integrated, community-based mental healthcare. We are committed to promoting collaborative care, psychological first aid, health promotion, and early intervention while supporting the integration of mental health into primary care systems worldwide.

Looking ahead, the section aims to develop position papers, policy documents, and best-practice guidance, while organizing symposia, seminars, and educational activities that encourage interdisciplinary dialogue. We also hope to promote collaborative research, develop training resources, and build an international repository of knowledge and good practices in primary care mental health and public health.

We warmly invite WASP members with an interest in these areas to participate in the section's activities, and work with us in advancing integrated, equitable, and person-centred mental healthcare across the world.

Gabriel Ivbijaro, Vincenzo Di Nicola

WASP section on Early Career Psychiatrists

The Early Career Psychiatrist Section of the World Association of Social Psychiatry (WASP) continues to serve as a vibrant platform for engaging and mentoring the next generation of psychiatrists with an interest in social psychiatry. The section builds on the strong foundation established under the leadership of Dr. Maria Carandang, whose three-year tenure saw the successful development of the section through academic sessions, essay competitions, and the introduction of a dedicated journal section.

As the section enters a new leadership term, its primary goal is to strengthen the global network of early-career psychiatrists by expanding membership and increasing representation from different regions of the world. Planned initiatives include organizing webinars, live academic sessions, lectures, competitions, podcasts, quizzes, and journal-writing activities, while also developing educational resources and study materials in social psychiatry. The section will further focus on enhancing its digital and social media presence and encouraging greater participation in the WASP Newsletter as a platform for knowledge sharing and scholarly exchange. Working closely with senior members of WASP, the section also aims to foster mentorship, international collaboration, and leadership development, creating opportunities for early-career psychiatrists to learn, contribute, and actively shape the future of social psychiatry.

Soumitra Das, Nivedita Sudheer

News from member societies

Argentina



On 21 March 2026, the Argentine Branch of the World Association of Social Psychiatry (WASP) participated in an information session for healthcare teams from the Social Rate Psychologists Network of the City of Buenos Aires. The session, titled "Mental Health, Well-being, and Resilience in a Complex World," was led by Dr. Alejandra Maddocks and Dr. Karín Rosenfeld. The program provided a valuable platform for discussing the increasingly important role of social psychiatry in understanding and addressing contemporary mental health challenges. Through an interdisciplinary perspective, the speakers explored the social determinants of health and their influence on mental health, psychological well-being, and community resilience. Emphasis was placed on how social and environmental conditions shape mental health outcomes and the importance of strengthening resilience at both individual and community levels. The session also highlighted the unique challenges faced by women experiencing crisis, violence, and social vulnerability, underscoring the need for mental health services that are both socially responsive and trauma-informed. Recognizing these broader social contexts remains central to the practice and philosophy of social psychiatry.

An important component of the program focused on the well-being of healthcare professionals themselves. The speakers addressed the growing burden of occupational stress, burnout, and secondary trauma among healthcare workers, emphasizing that self-care and institutional support are not only essential for maintaining professional effectiveness but also represent ethical and organizational responsibilities. The session concluded with an engaging exchange of ideas among participants, reflecting a shared commitment to integrating psychosocial perspectives into clinical practice, promoting mental well-being, and strengthening professional and community resilience in the face of contemporary social challenges. The active participation and discussion reinforced the importance of collaborative dialogue in advancing the principles of social psychiatry within healthcare systems.

Pakistan

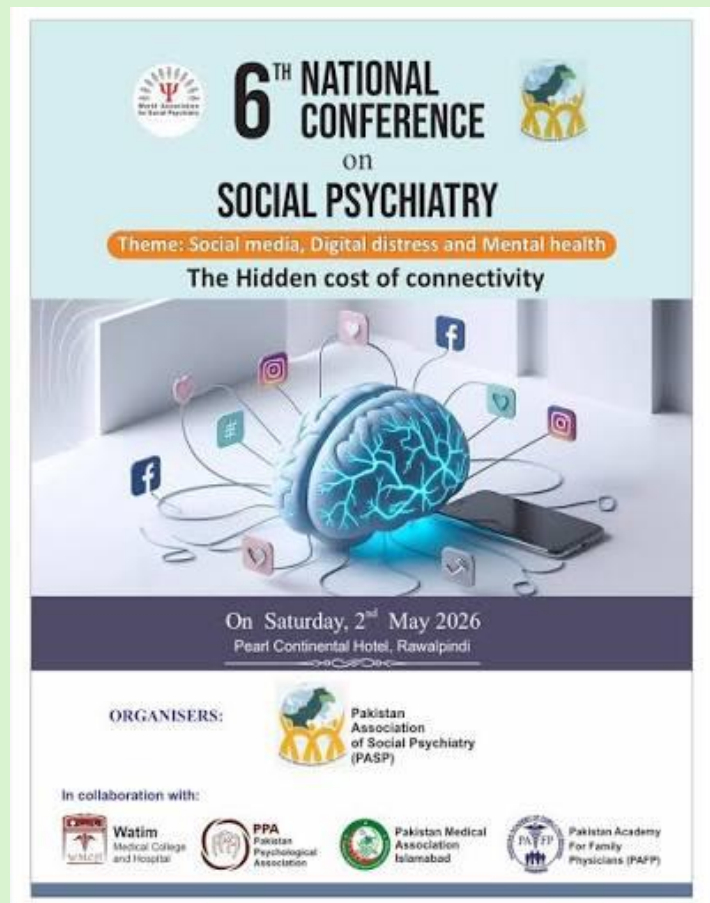
The Pakistan Association of Social Psychiatry (PASP) successfully organized the 6th National Conference on Social Psychiatry in Rawalpindi, Pakistan, in May 2026. The conference focused on the timely theme "Social Media, Digital Distress and Mental Health: The Hidden Cost of Connectivity," highlighting the growing mental health challenges associated with increasing digital engagement.

The inaugural session was attended by Professor Shoaib Shafi, Senior Vice President of the College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan (CPSP), as Chief Guest, and Dr. Wajid Ali Akhunzada, President of the Pakistan Psychiatric Society, who delivered the keynote address. The conference theme, proposed by Chief Organizer Professor Mazhar Malik, was widely appreciated for its contemporary relevance.

The scientific program featured original research presentations by psychiatrists, psychologists, and other mental health professionals from across the country. Discussions addressed digital distress, social determinants of mental health, and the importance of maintaining a healthy balance between virtual and real-life interactions. The Professor Khalid Mufti Gold Medal was awarded to the best young researcher in recognition of outstanding scientific work.

Four parallel workshops provided practical training on autism in the digital world, forensic psychiatry, ethical and clinical challenges arising from AI-assisted self-diagnosis, youth mental health in the digital era, and strategies to recognize and manage digital distress among healthcare professionals.

By addressing topics ranging from the prevention of digital distress to the responsible use of social media and emerging technologies, the conference provided a comprehensive overview of the hidden costs of connectivity while promoting evidence-based approaches to mental health care. The enthusiastic participation of mental health professionals from across the country underscored the growing importance of social psychiatry in responding to the rapidly evolving digital landscape.



INDIA

The Mid-Term CME of the Indian Association for Social Psychiatry (IASP) for the year 2026 was held in Jaipur on 9th and 10th May. The theme of the scientific program was 'Changing Society: Reshaping Mental Health' which was widely appreciated.

The sessions went mostly by the clock with an active presence of the audience in the hall. The program included 2 workshops, 1 debate, 1 symposium, 1 panel discussion and 11 plenary lectures. The key highlights of the program were: Workshop on statistics and research methodology for trainees, Debate on Digital Ban for Children and Adolescents, Panel Discussion on Artificial Intelligence reshaping mental health care for the future, Symposium on Social consequences of Ageing, and Lectures on Occupational Health, Climate Change, Conflicts amongst various others. A Quiz and Poster presentation session was also organized to encourage the participation of the trainees. Overall, it was a well-planned scientific schedule, encouraging a very good attendance i.e., 182 registered delegates and active participation from different groups i.e., Senior Psychiatry and Clinical Psychology Faculty (from Academic and Private Sector), and Psychiatry and Clinical Psychology trainees.

The inaugural program had Dr Deepak Maheshwari, Principal, SMS medical college, Jaipur as the Chief Guest and Dr SS Agarwal, Past President IMA and Past President AIIMS Jodhpur as the Guest of Honour. The CME had good participation from the Office Bearers and the Executive Council members of the IASP. Despite a 2-day spread, the sessions were well attended. Participants got an excellent opportunity for social interaction and networking. The program was widely appreciated by the IASP EC, members and delegates in general. The efforts of the Organizing Committee (led by the following: Dr Lalit Batra, Organizing Chairperson; Dr Raghav Shah, Organizing Secretary; Dr Sanjay Jain, Chief Patron; Dr Sunil Sharma, Treasurer) were also recognized.

Dr. Debashish Basu
President, IASP

Dr. Nitin Gupta
Secretary-General, IASP



ANNUAL NATIONAL MID-TERM CME 2026 OF INDIAN ASSOCIATION FOR SOCIAL PSYCHIATRY (IASP)

9th -10th May, 2026

Venue:

RAJASTHAN INTERNATIONAL CENTRE JAIPUR



INDIA



The 2nd National Conference of the World Association of Dynamic Psychiatry (WADP) – India Chapter was held in Raipur, India, from 24–26 April 2026. The conference, co-sponsored by the World Association of Social Psychiatry (WASP), brought together more than 200 delegates from across the country for three days of scientific deliberations and academic exchange. The scientific program featured distinguished national and international faculty addressing a wide range of contemporary themes in dynamic psychiatry. Highlights included lectures by Professor Norman Sartorius on supporting caregivers of people with mental illness, Professor Mohan Isaac on early intervention in psychosis from a psycho-dynamic perspective, Professor Roy Abraham Kallivayalil's presidential address on Dynamic Psychiatry and Ethics in the Contemporary World, Professor Swaran Singh on Dynamic Psychiatry in the Indian Context: From Mindfulness to Atman, Professor T.S.S. Rao on psychodynamics in integrated sex therapy, and Professor Pratap Sharan on Fairbairn's contribution to psychoanalytic theory. A theme symposium featuring Rakesh Chadda, Snehil Gupta, Smitha Ramdas, Heena Merchant, Ajay Kumar, and Shashi Rai further enriched the academic program.

The conference was inaugurated by Lt. General Ashok Jindal, Director of AIIMS Raipur, and presided over by Professor Roy Abraham Kallivayalil, President of WADP India. In addition to the scientific sessions, the program included free paper presentations, workshops, the General Assembly, and a cultural program, providing opportunities for both academic interaction and professional networking.

The conference was successfully organized under the leadership of Dr. Ajay Kumar (AIIMS Bhopal) and his dedicated team, whose efforts contributed to a memorable and academically rewarding event.

Roy A Kallivayalil
WADP India President & WASP Past President

About AASP Abraham Helpern Humanitarian of the Year, 2026 Awardee



The World Association of Social Psychiatry is delighted to congratulate Dr. Steven S. Sharfstein on being honored with the Abraham Helpern Humanitarian of the Year Award by the American Association for Social Psychiatry (AASP) for his invaluable contribution in advancing mental healthcare access to those in need. This prestigious recognition celebrates a career spanning more than five decades of distinguished service in clinical psychiatry, mental health education, and advocacy.

Dr. Sharfstein has made enduring contributions to psychiatry through leadership in academic, clinical, and public mental health. After serving for three decades as President and Chief Executive Officer of Sheppard Pratt, he continues to teach as an Adjunct Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Maryland/Sheppard Pratt and the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Earlier in his career, he held key leadership positions at the National Institute of Mental Health and the American Psychiatric Association, contributing significantly to the development of mental health services and policy in the United States. A prolific scholar, Dr. Sharfstein has authored nearly 200 scientific papers, numerous book chapters, and several influential books on mental health policy, psychiatric services, and hospital psychiatry. His commitment to advancing mental healthcare has been matched by exceptional professional leadership, including his tenure as President of the American Psychiatric Association (2005–2006) and several other national and regional psychiatric organizations. Throughout his career, Dr. Sharfstein has championed compassionate, accessible, and patient-centered mental healthcare while advocating for policies that promote equity and uphold human dignity. The Abraham Helpern Humanitarian of the Year Award is a fitting tribute to his remarkable legacy of service, leadership, and unwavering commitment to the advancement of psychiatry.

Professor Swaran Singh Appointed to the House of Lords



WASP warmly congratulates Professor Swaran Singh, Professor of Social and Community Psychiatry at the University of Warwick, on his appointment as a Life Peer in the House of Lords. The appointment recognizes Professor Singh's distinguished contributions to mental health research, clinical psychiatry, public service, and the promotion of equality and human rights. An internationally respected social psychiatrist, his work has advanced the fields of early intervention in psychosis, mental health among ethnic minority communities, and the transition of young people from child to adult mental health services.

Alongside his academic career, he continues to serve as a Consultant Psychiatrist with the Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership NHS Trust. Professor Singh has also made significant contributions to public life, including serving as a Commissioner of the Equality and Human Rights Commission (2013–2019), and advising national and international organizations on mental health policy and healthcare equity. WASP extends its heartfelt congratulations to Professor Swaran Singh on this well-deserved honor and wishes him every success in his new role.

Juneteenth and the role of Psychiatry in healing and resilience

History leaves its imprint not only on nations, but also on minds. As the United States commemorates Juneteenth on June 19 and celebrates its 250th anniversary on July 4, 2026, these milestones invite reflection on the enduring relationship between history, identity, resilience, and mental health.

Juneteenth marks the end of slavery in the United States and stands as a powerful symbol of freedom, resilience, and progress. For many individuals and communities, it also serves as a reminder of the enduring psychological effects of slavery, discrimination, and systemic inequities. Recognizing this history enables clinicians to place patients' experiences within a broader social and historical context while appreciating the resilience and strength that have been passed down across generations.

Similarly, the 250th anniversary of the United States invites reflection on the nation's founding ideals of liberty and equality. While these principles have inspired generations, they have not always been experienced equally by all Americans. Psychiatry can help individuals and communities explore how historical narratives shape identity, belonging, and emotional well-being, particularly among populations that have experienced marginalization.

These commemorations also provide an opportunity to advance cultural humility and promote mental health awareness. Through community engagement, educational initiatives, and public dialogue, mental health professionals can foster conversations about resilience, healing, and the lasting influence of historical experiences on present-day well-being. Integrating history, storytelling, art, and mental health education can strengthen community connections while helping to reduce the stigma surrounding mental illness.

In the clinical setting, these milestones can also encourage meaningful reflection. Questions such as, *"What does freedom and self-determination mean in your life?"* Or *"How do you envision a more equitable future for yourself and your community?"* May help patients explore identity, personal growth, hope, and resilience within the context of their own lived experiences.

As psychiatrists, we are uniquely positioned to bridge the past and the present. By acknowledging historical experiences while promoting resilience, advocacy, and healing, we can help individuals and communities move forward with greater understanding and empowerment. Juneteenth and America's 250th anniversary remind us that mental health is deeply intertwined with history, culture, and community—and that healing often begins with understanding our collective story.

Aida Minajovic

MD, MS, DFAPA, FACPpsych

Department of Psychiatry, UIC Chicago



Coming event update

The World Association of Social Psychiatry (WASP) is pleased to announce that the 26th World Congress of Social Psychiatry will be held in New Delhi, India, from 6–December 6-9, 2028, under the leadership of Professor Rakesh Chadda, President of WASP. The Congress will be held under the theme "Mental Health Across the World: Contemporary Challenges." The Congress will be organized and conducted under the able guidance of Professor Pratap Sharan as Chair and Professor Mamta Sood as Co-Chair.

Bringing together psychiatrists, mental health professionals, researchers, educators, policymakers, and advocates from across the globe, the Congress will provide a vibrant platform for scientific exchange, interdisciplinary collaboration, and dialogue on the evolving challenges and opportunities in mental health. The program will feature keynote lectures, symposia, workshops, free paper presentations, and opportunities for networking and international collaboration.

As the flagship scientific meeting of WASP, the Congress will celebrate advances in social psychiatry while exploring innovative approaches to addressing contemporary mental health challenges across diverse cultural and healthcare settings.

We warmly invite WASP members and colleagues worldwide to join us in New Delhi as we come together to advance the science, practice, and global mission of Social Psychiatry.



New Delhi, Capital of India

WASP Executive Committee (2028-2028)



President: Rakesh Kumar Chadda (India)

Professor Emeritus, National Academy of Medical Sciences, (India)
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Honorary Senior Clinical Lecturer, Oxford University
Deputy National Speciality Lead for Mental Health, NIHR CRN
National mental health lead, British Medical Association Consultant
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(Canada)



Roy Abraham Kallivayalil
(India)