

Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC) releases press statement

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Experts in the field of psychiatry meet around the importance of integrated care for communities

With the trauma that many South Africans have, and still continue to experience, it is fitting that the theme of the World Psychiatry Association (WPA) International Congress 2016 is Psychiatry: Integrative Care for the Community.

The CTICC is proud to host psychiatrists and experts in the field of psychiatry during their 2016 congress taking place from the 18th to the 22nd of November. It is the first time the congress will be held in South Africa and only the second time it will be hosted in Africa, after taking place in Egypt in 2005.

A major aim of the congress is to highlight the lack of psychiatrists in Africa, but will also place emphasis on illness prevention, health promotion, clinical care, and rehabilitation interventions. The congress will additionally touch on the effect war has on mental health.

"South Africa comes from a rich history, but it also comes from a turbulent history, and many times we forget that it has affected communities and society in a big way. Being awarded the bid to host the congress was important to the CTICC because it was not only about hosting experts and like-minded individuals, it was also about placing a firm spotlight on the mental health needs of the people of South Africa and indeed Africa," says Julie-May Ellingson, Chief Executive Officer at the CTICC.

Ellingson adds: "We forget the importance of taking care of our mental health, and we welcome experts in this field to exchange knowledge and shape ideas to better the lives of people."

Bernard Janse van Rensburg, President-elect of the South African Society of Psychiatrists and Chairperson of the Local Organising Committee, says that several countries in Africa did not have associations for psychiatrists and more importantly, lacked the number of psychiatrists to meet the need.

"Another aim of the WPA International Congress in Cape Town will be to focus on trainees and early career psychiatrists. With this meeting, the practice of psychiatry is set to take more decisive steps on a new course that will influence the profession for years to come.

"We are hoping to see the forging of a strong links between society and psychiatry, and the Cape Town declaration which will come out of this event should see the basis of a new social contract involving all the different stakeholders in this undertaking," says Janse van Rensburg.

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