

PROGRAMME

GLOBAL MENTAL HEALTH IN AN ERA OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: RESEARCH AND POLICY PRIORITIES



science
& technology

Department:
Science and Technology
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Leopoldina
Nationale Akademie
der Wissenschaftler





GLOBAL MENTAL HEALTH IN AN ERA OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: RESEARCH AND POLICY PRIORITIES

Date: 30 – 31 May 2019

Venue: Saint George's Hotel and Convention Centre, Centurion, Gauteng, South Africa

30 MAY 2019

08:00 – 09:00 Arrival and Registration

SESSION 1: WELCOMING AND OPENING ADDRESS

Facilitator: **Prof Rita Thom**, Oxford Health Care Centre, Department of Psychiatry, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa

09:00 – 09:20 **Welcome Remarks**

Mr Stanley Maphosa, International and National Liaison Manager, Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf)

Prof Frank Rösler, Leopoldina Board Member and Senior Professor, Biological Psychology and Neuropsychology, University of Hamburg, Germany

09:20 – 09:40 ***Addressing Mental Health Disorders in the African Region***

Dr Steven Shongwe, Acting Director, Non-communicable Diseases, World Health Organisation Regional Office for Africa

09:40 – 10:00 ***Global Mental Health and the Sustainable Development Goals: Aligning the Research and Policy Agendas***

Prof Crick Lund, Alan J Flisher Centre for Public Mental Health, Department of Psychiatry and Mental Health, University of Cape Town, South Africa

10:00 – 10:30 **Keynote Address:**

Representative of the Department of Health, South Africa

10:30 – 11:00 **Q&A**

11:00 – 11:30 **Coffee Break and Group Photo**

SESSION 2: NEUROSCIENCE AND GENETICS

Facilitator: **Prof Bongani Chiliza**, Head, Department of Psychiatry, University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

11:30 – 11:50 ***Mental Health Research Priorities in South Africa: Should We Include Neurogenetics?***

Prof Dan Stein, Head, Department of Psychiatry and Mental Health, University of Cape Town, South Africa

11:50 – 12:10 ***Breakthrough in Understanding the Molecular Causes of Psychiatric Disorders***

Prof Markus Nöthen, Director, Institute of Human Genetics, University Hospital of Bonn, Germany

12:10 – 12:30 ***China Brain Project and Macaque Models for Biomedical Research***

Prof Mu-ming Poo, Director, Institute of Neuroscience, Chinese Academy of Sciences, China

12:30 – 12:50 ***Family Studies from Endogamous Groups Enable the Elucidation of Distinct Predisposing Pathways in Dyslexia***

Prof Subrata Sinha, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, India

12:50 – 13:20 **Q&A**

13:20 – 14:20 **Lunch Break**

SESSION 3: PUBLIC MENTAL HEALTH AND EPIDEMIOLOGY

Facilitator: **Prof Markus Nöthen**, Director, Institute of Human Genetics, University Hospital of Bonn, Germany

14:20 – 14:40 ***Common Mental Disorders Among Individuals Seeking HIV Testing***

Prof Ashraf Kagee, Co-Director, Centre for Public Mental Health, University of Stellenbosch, South Africa

14:40 – 15:00 ***Addressing the Challenge of Mental Disorders: Genetic Approaches to Nosology, Etiology, and Treatment***

Prof Marcella Rietschel, Scientific Director, Department of Genetic Epidemiology in Psychiatry, Central Institute of Mental Health, Germany

15:00 – 15:20 ***Priorities of Mental Health Public Policy in Portuguese-speaking Countries from Africa and South America: How to Build Nationwide Care Systems in Contexts of Social Inequalities, Vulnerability and Scarcity***

Professor Pedro Gabriel Delgado, Institute of Psychiatry, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

15:20 – 15:50 **Coffee Break**

- 15:50 – 16:10** ***Adolescent Substance Abuse Trends: The Need for Early Identification***
- Prof Arvin Bhana**, Chief Research Specialist, Health Systems Research Unit, South African Medical Research Council, South Africa
- 16:10 – 16:40** **Q&A**
- 16:40 – 17:00** **Wrap-up of Day 1**
- Prof Crick Lund**, Alan J Flisher Centre for Public Mental Health, Department of Psychiatry and Mental Health, University of Cape Town
- Prof Frank Rösler**, Senior Professor, Biological Psychology and Neuropsychology, University of Hamburg

Evening Dinner

- Facilitator:** **Dr Khutso Phalane-Legoale**, Programme Officer: Health and Related Sciences, Academy of Science of South Africa
- 18:30 – 19:00** ***Provider Core Competencies for Improved Mental Health Care of the Nation***
- Prof Rita Thom**, ASSAf Consensus Study Chair and Oxford Health Care Centre, Department of Psychiatry, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa

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SESSION 4: INTERVENTION RESEARCH

- Facilitator:** **Prof Ashraf Kagee**, Co-Director, Centre for Public Mental Health, University of Stellenbosch, South Africa
- 08:30 – 09:00** **Arrival and Registration**
- 09:00 – 09:20** ***Epigenetics in Psychiatry and Psychotherapy – At the Crossroads Between Risk and Resilience***
- Prof Katharina Domschke**, Department of Psychiatry and Psychotherapy, University of Freiburg, Germany
- 09:20 – 09:40** ***Using Intervention Research to Drive Evidence-based Integration of Mental Health into Primary Health Care Settings in South Africa***
- Prof Inge Petersen**, Centre for Rural Health, University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
- 09:40 – 10:00** ***Providing Screening, Brief Interventions and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) for Substance Use Disorders into South Africa's Primary Health Care Services: Lessons from Local Research***
- Prof Bronwyn Myers**, Chief Specialist Scientist: Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Research Unit, South African Medical Research Council, South Africa
- 10:00 – 10:20** ***Overcoming Trauma and Violence – From Individual Trauma Narratives to Community-based Intervention in War-torn Regions***
- Prof Thomas Elbert**, Professor of Clinical Psychology and Neuropsychology, University of Konstanz, Germany
- 10:20 – 10:40** **Q&A**
- 10:40 – 11:10** **Coffee Break**

SESSION 5: BREAK-AWAY: IDENTIFYING POLICY AND RESEARCH PRIORITIES IN MENTAL HEALTH

Facilitator **Dr Siyavuya Bulani**, Senior Liaison Officer, Academy of Science of South Africa

11:10 – 12:30 Group 1: Neuroscience and Genetics
Group 2: Public Mental Health and Epidemiology
Group 3: Intervention Research

12:30 – 13:00 **Feedback**

13:00 – 14:00 **Lunch**

SESSION 6: RESEARCH SUPPORT: FUNDERS

Facilitator: **Mr Stanley Maphosa**, International and National Liaison Manager, ASSAf

14:00 – 14:15 ***NRF Funding Opportunities for Mental Health Research***

Mrs Tracy Klarenbeek, Director: Knowledge Advancement and Support, National Research Foundation, South Africa

14:15 – 14:30 ***SAMRC Funding for Mental Health Research***

Prof Rachel Jewkes, Executive Scientist: Research Strategy, South African Medical Research Council, South Africa

14:30 – 14:45 ***Janssen/J&J GPH Support for Mental Health Programmes in South Africa***

Ms Abeda Williams, Senior Director Technical and Medical Affairs, Janssen Pharmaceutica, South Africa

14:45 – 15:15 Q&A

15:15 – 15:35 **Wrap-up and Closure of Workshop**

Prof Crick Lund, Alan J Flisher Centre for Public Mental Health, Department of Psychiatry and Mental Health, University of Cape Town

Prof Frank Rösler, Senior Professor, Biological Psychology and Neuropsychology, University of Hamburg.

15:35 – 15:40 **Word of Thanks**

Dr Siyavuya Bulani, Senior Liaison Officer, ASSAf

BIOGRAPHIES



Arvin Bhana is a Chief Specialist Scientist in the Health Systems Research Unit at the South African Medical Research Council, an Honorary Associate Professorship at the Centre for Rural Health in the School of Nursing and Public Health at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and is a Fellow of the Department of Science and Technology-National Research Foundation Centre of Excellence in Human Development. He holds a PhD in Clinical and Community Psychology from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign in the United States and is a registered clinical psychologist in South Africa. He has an established record of grantsmanship and is currently one of 3 PI's on the NIMH Southern African Research Consortium for Mental Health INTeGration (S-MhINT) HUBS, a co-investigator on a CDC scale-up grant on Mental Health INTeGration (MhINT) and the capacity development lead on the SMART Africa NIMH HUB. His publication record spans the authoring and co-authoring of more than 100 journal articles. His scholarly interests include child and adolescent well-being and mental health, as well as integrating mental health into primary care among adults and a specific interest in brief interventions for substance use in primary care.

Siyavuya Bulani is the Senior Liaison Officer at the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) in charge of the Academy's Overseas Collaboration sub-program. Siyavuya is responsible for all the academy's bilateral agreements with other overseas academies, multilateral organisations and represents ASSAf at Government Joint Commission on Science and Technology (JCST). His role is to build new and maintain existing overseas partnerships, and serve as the main contact person for all overseas collaborative activities and engagements. Siyavuya has previously worked at the South African Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and the Agricultural Research Council (ARC) as a researcher. Siyavuya holds a PhD in Biotechnology from the University of Free State, South Africa.



Bonga Chiliza is an Associate Professor/Chief Specialist and Head of the Department of Psychiatry at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. He completed his medical degree and psychiatry specialisation at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and his PhD at Stellenbosch University. His research interests include schizophrenia, consultation-liaison psychiatry, health services and medical education. He is the President of the South African Society of Psychiatrists, as well as the Deputy Editor of *the South African Journal of Psychiatry*. Bonga has received several awards including the Hamilton Naki Clinical Research Fellowship and the South African Health Excellence Award. He has authored over 60 peer-reviewed articles and book chapters. He has also served on several non-governmental organisation boards, including the SA YMCA and Life Choices. He is one of the Founding Directors of Harambee Medical Consulting and African Global Mental Health Institute.



Pedro Gabriel Godinho Delgado, MD, PhD, is a Brazilian psychiatrist; he holds a Masters degree in psychiatry from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (1983), a doctorate in medicine (Preventive Medicine) from the University of São Paulo (1992) and a postdoctoral degree from London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, University of London (2008). He was the Head of the National Coordination of Mental Health, Alcohol & Other Drugs of the Ministry of Health in Brazil from August 2000 to December 2010 and President of the III National Conference on Mental Health (2001) and the IV National Conference on Mental Health – Inter-Sectoral (2010). He is an Adjunct Professor at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (Faculty of Medicine and Institute of Psychiatry-IPUB). He has experience in the areas of Public Health and Medicine/ Psychiatry, with emphasis on Mental Health, working mainly on the following themes: public mental health policies; psychiatry; deinstitutionalisation; public policies for alcohol and other drugs; mental health at primary health care; global mental health. He is currently the regional Vice-President of the World Association for Psychosocial Rehabilitation. He lives in Rio de Janeiro.



Katharina Domschke is a Full Professor of Psychiatry and Chair of the Department of Psychiatry and Psychotherapy at the University of Freiburg in Germany. She completed her studies in medicine and psychology at the University of Muenster, Germany, and Trinity College Dublin, Ireland (MD, 2004), as well as Boston University, Boston, MA, USA (MA, 2002), and Maastricht University, The Netherlands (PhD, 2010). After her board certification as a psychiatrist in 2010 she worked as an attending physician and Associate Professor at the Department of Psychiatry, University of Muenster, Germany. In 2012, she was appointed Full Professor of psychiatry at the University of Wuerzburg, Germany, in 2013 Executive Senior Physician, and in 2014 Vice-Chair of the Department of Psychiatry, University of Wuerzburg, Germany. In 2016, she was appointed Chair and Full Professor at the Department of Psychiatry, University of Freiburg, Germany, and Adjunct Professor at the Medical University of Vienna, Austria. Her clinical and teaching focus is on anxiety and depression. She is a renowned expert in genetics, epigenetics, imaging genetics and pharmacogenetics of anxiety and depression. She has authored 215 publications in international journals, two books and 25 book chapters. Her work has been recognised by e.g. the WFSBP Research Award, the WPA Fellowship Award and the ECNP Fellowship Award. She is a full member of the German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina. She is a Fellow of ACNP and full member of ECNP, ISPG and SOBP and serves on the editorial boards of e.g. the *International Journal of Neuropsychopharmacology*, *Pharmacopsychiatry*, *Progress in Neuropsychopharmacology & Biological Psychiatry*, *World Journal of Biological Psychiatry* and *Journal of Psychiatric Research* and is a regular ad-hoc reviewer for >60 international journals.



Thomas Elbert studied psychology (PhD 1978) and physics (diploma 1975) at the Universities of Munich and Tübingen. He worked at the Universities of Munich and Tübingen in the field of neuroscience until 1989 with intermittent visiting professorships at Pennsylvania State University and Stanford University. He then became Head of a clinical research group at the Medical Faculty of the University of Münster. Since 1995, he has been a Professor of Clinical Psychology and Behavioural Neuroscience at the University of Konstanz, studying the consequences of social and traumatic stress in the laboratory and also in crisis regions in Africa and Asia. Elbert is a Hector Fellow, Member of the German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina, the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and holds honorary professorships at the Université Lumière in Burundi and the Mbarara University of Science and Technology in Uganda.



Rachel Jewkes is the Executive Scientist for Research Strategy in the Office of the President of the South African Medical Research Council and an Honorary Professor at the University of the Witwatersrand School of Public Health. Previously she was the Director of the South African Medical Research Council's Gender and Health Research Unit. She is the Consortium Director of the DFID-funded What Works to Prevent Violence? Global Programme and the Secretary of the Sexual Violence Research Initiative, the global knowledge hub on gender-based violence research. She is a medical doctor, trained at St Thomas's Hospital in London, a physical health specialist and holds an MSc and MD from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. She has an A1-rating from the South Africa National Research Foundation. She has worked over three decades in research on violence against women, to build understanding this as a major obstacle to public health and development, and to use research for stronger global policy, prevention interventions and services for survivors. She is an author of over 350 peer-reviewed journal articles, reports, training manuals and book chapters. She is a member of the WHO Expert Advisory Panel on Injury and Violence Prevention and Control.

Ashraf Kagee is Distinguished Professor of Psychology at Stellenbosch University, Co-Director of the Alan Flisher Centre for Public Mental Health, and a Member of the Academy of Science of South Africa. He received his PhD in counselling psychology from Ball State University, completed a postdoctoral fellowship in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, and a Master of Public Health at the University of Cape Town. His work is broadly located at the nexus of psychology and public health. His research has focused on common mental disorders among persons living with HIV and the psychological and structural factors influencing adherence to antiretroviral therapy. With nearly 200 scientific publications to date, he has been awarded research grants from the South African Medical Research Council, the National Research Foundation, the British Academy, the Guggenheim Foundation. He has also been a co-investigator on several NIH-funded studies. From 2012 to 2017, he served on a working group of the World Health Organisation tasked with developing diagnostic guidelines for stress-related disorders for the forthcoming edition of the International Classification of Diseases. He is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Trauma Centre for Survivors of Violence and Torture in Cape Town and does capacity building work at the Gaza Community Mental Health Centre in Gaza, Palestine.



Tracy Klarenbeek has an undergraduate degree in molecular and cell biology from the University of the Witwatersrand and recently graduated cum laude with an MPhil in science and technology studies from Stellenbosch University. She is currently a Doctoral candidate, also at Stellenbosch. She has worked in the Knowledge Advancement and Support (previously Knowledge Fields Development) at the National Research Foundation in various roles and with various funding instruments since 2006. Her current portfolio consists primarily of science mission funding instruments, which are driven by the Department of Science and Technology's grand challenges, and the 1996 White Paper on Science and Technology's Geographic Advantage Areas – specifically marine, oceanic and polar research, and the palaeosciences.



Crick Lund is a Professor of Global Mental Health and Development in the Centre for Global Mental Health, Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience, King's College London, and Professor in the Alan J Flisher Centre for Public Mental Health, Department of Psychiatry and Mental Health, University of Cape Town. He is the Chief Executive Officer of the Programme for Improving Mental Health care (PRIME), a DFID funded research consortium focusing on the integration of mental health into primary care in low resource settings in Ethiopia, India, Nepal, South Africa and Uganda, and Principal Investigator of the Africa Focus on Intervention Research for Mental Health (AFFIRM) U19 NIMH Collaborative Hub. He trained as a clinical psychologist at the University of Cape Town in the mid-1990s and was subsequently involved in developing post-apartheid norms for mental health services for the national Department of Health. He worked for the World Health Organisation from 2000 – 2005, on the development of the WHO Mental Health Policy and Service Guidance Package, he has consulted to several countries on mental health policy and planning. He was a founding member of the Alan J Flisher Centre for Public Mental Health and served as its first Director, from 2010 to 2017. His research interests lie in mental health policy, service planning and the relationship between poverty and mental health in low and middle-income countries.

Bronwyn Myers is a Chief Specialist Scientist in the Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Research Unit of the South African Medical Research Council, where she leads the intervention Research sub-stream, with a special interest in effectiveness studies and implementation science. She has an honorary appointment with the University of Cape Town's Department of Psychiatry and Mental Health. Over the last 15 years her research has focused on enhancing access to and the quality of services for people with substance use disorders and co-occurring mental or physical health disorders. She is the principal investigator of a joint funded (British MRC, Wellcome Trust, ESRC) cluster randomized controlled trial testing different approaches to integrating task-shared counselling for common mental disorders (such as depression and alcohol use) into chronic disease care (project MIND). Prof. Myers has published extensively on the topics of mental and substance use disorders, vulnerable populations, and provision of evidence-based practices. She was one of the founding members of the South African Young Academy of Science (SAYAS). Her expertise on substance use and physical and mental health comorbidities has been acknowledged through invitations to serve on international technical advisory groups for the World Health Organization and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, grant review panels and through her involvement as an associate editor for several international journals.





Stanley Maphosa is the International and National Liaison Manager of the Academy of Science of South Africa. He is also the Regional Coordinator of The World Academy of Science sub-Saharan Africa Regional Partner. He leads and oversees Strategic Partnerships, Overseas Collaborations, African Collaborations, Gender in Science Technology and Innovation, as well as Young Scientist Liaison. His role is to develop relations with science academies, multilateral science organisation, universities, government departments, Parliament, embassies, civil society and science councils. He is a science diplomat, involved in internationalisation of science, international science collaborations, science advice, science advocacy and science communication. His work also includes providing leadership and guidance to the South African National Chapter of the Organisation for Women in Science for the Developing World, the South African Young Academy of Science and support for the hosting of the International Council for Science Regional Office for Africa. He is a Disaster Management Professional, member of the International Government Science Advisers African Chapter and a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. He is currently studying for a PhD in social science at the University of Fort Hare.

Markus Nöthen completed his undergraduate medical studies at the University of Würzburg. He transferred to the University of Bonn in order to pursue his chosen career in human genetics. In Bonn, he completed his specialist medical training at the University Hospital, and his postdoctoral research.. In 2001, he was called to the University Chair of Medical Genetics in Antwerp, and appointed Head of the Centre of Medical Genetics at the city's University Hospital. In 2004, he was appointed Alfried Krupp von Bohlen and Halbach Professor of Genetic Medicine at the University of Bonn, as well as founding Director of the newly established Department of Genomics at the Life & Brain Research Centre. Since 2008, he has also held the position of Director of the Institute of Human Genetics at the University Hospital of Bonn. His scientific area of interest is research into the genetic causes of disease, in particular, multifactorial disorders. His main research focus is the investigation of affective and schizophrenia-spectrum disorders. To generate novel insights into the underlying biology of these common and debilitating disorders, his research teams apply a wide range of state-of-the-art molecular genetic/biology techniques. He has (co-)authored over 700 original publications and ranks among the most widely cited German scientists. In 2010, he was elected as a member of the German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina.





Inge Petersen, PhD, is Research Professor and Director of the Centre for Rural Health in the College of Health Sciences at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa. She has extensive experience in integrated mental health care in low and middle-income countries. Over the past 15 years she has played a leading role in several research consortia and studies in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia that have used intervention research to investigate and drive the integration of mental health into primary health care.

Khutso Phalane-Legoale is a programme officer (Health and Related Sciences) in the Science Advisory Programme of the Academy of Science of South Africa. She holds a PhD degree in genetics from the University of Pretoria. Khutso has been involved in projects which cover a broad spectrum of research problems in the fields of evolution, genetics, reproductive and developmental biology of humans and medicine. At the Academy she has worked on various consensus studies including one on Provider Core Competencies for Improved Mental Healthcare of the Nation and one on Human Genetics and Genomics in South Africa : Ethical, Legal and Social Implications.



Mu-ming Poo is the founding and current Director of Institute of Neuroscience, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Director of the Centre for Excellence in Brain Science and Intelligence Technology, and Paul Licht Distinguished Professor in Biology Emeritus at University of California, Berkeley. He studied physics at Tsinghua University (Taiwan) and received a PhD in biophysics from Johns Hopkins University. He had served on the faculty of the University of California at Irvine, Yale University, Columbia University, and the University of California at San Diego, and the University of California, Berkeley. His main research interest is to understand the cellular mechanisms regulating the formation and plasticity of neural circuits. He is a member of Academia Sinica, US National Academy of Sciences, Chinese Academy of Sciences, and Academy of Science of Hong Kong. He had received Docteur Honoris Causa from Ecole Normale Supérieure, Paris and from Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Ameritec Prize (2001), P R China International Science & Technology Cooperation Award (2005), Qishui Distinguished Scientist Award (2011), and Gruber Neuroscience Prize (2016). He is currently on the editorial board of more than ten scientific journals and serves as the Executive Editor-in-Chief for the *National Science Review*.



Marcella Rietschel is a psychiatrist, psychotherapist, and medical geneticist. Since 2002, she has been the Director of the Department of Genetic Epidemiology in Psychiatry and of the Molecular Genetic Laboratory at the Central Institute of Mental Health in Mannheim (University of Heidelberg) Germany. Her research focus is the identification of genetic and environmental risk factors for psychiatric disease, with a specific emphasis on refining phenotype-genotype correlations across diagnostic categories through the application of advanced techniques for phenotype assessment and statistical analysis. Furthermore, she was responsible for the psychiatric phenotype characterisation of the German National Cohort, a longitudinal study of 200 000 persons from the general population in Germany.

To facilitate her research, she has initiated world-wide collaborations and has established a large biobank of DNA, plasma, serum, and microbiome samples, and a data bank of phenotypes obtained from psychiatric patients, family members, and controls.

She has published more than 600 peer-reviewed papers. At an early stage of her career, she developed an interest in the study of the ethical, legal, and social implications of psychiatric genetic research, since in her opinion, knowledge of genetic influences on behaviour and mental illness is not only of relevance to the scientific community, but rather to society as a whole. She collaborates with representatives from diverse disciplines, e.g., lawyers, ethicists, philosophers, and patient representatives, and provides advice on ethical issues to both national and EU-funded projects in the capacity of both investigator and scientific advisor. She is engaged in ongoing dialogue with the European Network of Research Ethic Committees in order to harmonise informed consent forms for participants in psychiatric genetic studies across Europe. In addition, she is an active member of the Task Force on Genetic Testing of the ISPG.

Frank Rösler became full Professor for Experimental and Biological Psychology at the Philipps-University Marburg (Germany) in 1986. After retirement in 2010, he served for three years as a Senior Professor for Experimental and Biological Psychology at the University of Potsdam (Germany). Since 2013, he is Senior Professor at the unit for Biological Psychology and Neuropsychology at the University of Hamburg (Germany). His research interests focus on biological correlates of perception, memory, language, and development by using electroencephalography and MRI to monitor brain activity. Rösler is member of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and of the German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina. He received the Wilhelm-Wundt Medal of the German Society for Psychology, the Max-Planck-Prize for International cooperation, and he was honored with the Life-time award of the German Society for Psychology. Currently he is member of the presidential board of the German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina.





Steven Shongwe is a public health specialist with over 30 years of clinical and public health experience. He holds the degrees of Master of Science in Public Health in developing countries from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Master of Business Management from the Eastern and Southern Africa Management Institute, Arusha, Tanzania and a Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery from the University of Nairobi, Kenya. Currently, he is the acting Director of the Non-communicable Diseases cluster in the WHO Regional Office for Africa. Prior to joining WHO in 2013, he was the Principal Secretary in the Ministry of Health in Swaziland responsible for overseeing the health services in that country. He is a former Director General of the East, Central and Southern African Health Community, a regional health organisation based in Arusha, Tanzania. His areas of expertise are in public health policy and programme management, including management of mental health and non-communicable diseases, health systems and services. He has a keen interest in leadership and management, including people management, teamwork, partnership and networking.

Subrata Sinha is the Head of the Department of Biochemistry at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences. He has been working on neurodevelopmental genetics and molecular processes associated with hereditary learning disability, by studying three generational families from different endogamous groups. These have helped in identifying distinct dyslexia endophenotypes and some novel neurodevelopmental pathways associated with dyslexia. He has also developed a multi-disciplinary collaborative research programme at the institute on the genetics of glioma. He has, along with collaborators, identified an atypical cadherin, FAT1, to be affected in a sub-set of high-grade glioma that has high levels of pro-inflammatory cytokines, as also a gene signature that characterises the cross talk of hypoxia and inflammation in glial tumours having poor prognosis.



He was awarded the Swarnajayanti Fellowship by the Department of Science and Technology India in 1998. He was elected Fellow of the Indian National Science Academy and the National Academy of Medical Sciences, India and Indian Academy of Sciences. He is a Fellow and was President, Indian Academy of Neurosciences. He has been awarded the JC Bose Fellowship of the Indian Department of Science and Technology and also the Sun Pharma award (basic research). He has chaired and also served on several Scientific Advisory committees of DBT and ICMR institutes, Project Review committees of national scientific bodies and the boards of studies of several university schools and departments. He has chaired the committee of the Medical Council of India for modernising the biochemistry curriculum. He has been active in introducing molecular medicine and research exposure in the MBBS curriculum.



Rita Thom is a general psychiatrist with diverse interests and work experience in both the public and private sectors in South Africa. She has experience and expertise in general adult psychiatry, child and adolescent psychiatry, neuropsychiatry and the treatment of eating disorders. She is an honorary Adjunct Professor in the Division of Psychiatry where she is involved in postgraduate teaching and research and also serves on the Human Research Ethics Committee (Medical) at the University of the Witwatersrand. She has been involved in teaching and training health care practitioners at all levels within the health system on a continuous basis throughout her career. She has developed training materials for clinicians to improve mental health care for people living with HIV (children, adolescents and adults). She also has an interest and involvement in policy and service development and has played an active role in various portfolios in the South African Society of Psychiatrists throughout her career. She believes that there is a critical need for strong advocacy in accessing resources for people with mental disorders. She is currently Chairperson of the expert panel appointed by the Academy of Science of South Africa for a consensus study on Providing Core Competencies for Improved Mental Health Care of the Nation.

Dan J Stein is Professor and Chair of the Dept of Psychiatry at the University of Cape Town, Director of the South African Medical Research Council's Unit on Risk & Resilience in Mental Disorders, and Scientific Director of UCT's Neuroscience Institute. Dan's training includes doctoral degrees in clinical neuroscience and in philosophy, and a post-doctoral fellowship in psychopharmacology. He is a clinician-scientist whose work has long focused on anxiety and related disorders, including obsessive-compulsive spectrum conditions and posttraumatic stress disorder. His approach is integrative, moving between bench (laboratory neuroscience), bed (clinical research), and bundu (public health). His research has had considerable influence, as evidenced by a Google h-index > 130, perhaps the highest of any African scientist. He has also influenced the field through mentorship; his mentees have worked on a range of topics relevant to South Africa and Africa, and they occupy leadership posts in a range of areas including addiction psychiatry, child health, liaison psychiatry, neurogenetics, neuroimaging, neuropsychiatry, public mental health, psychopharmacology, and psychotherapy.



Abeda Williams studied at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg (B.Pharm. 1987) and has a diploma as a paralegal from the University of Johannesburg. She completed her internship at the Coronation Hospital and Adcock Ingram Critical Care and then moved in the pharmaceutical industry. She worked as the Medical Director for Janssen Pharmaceutica, South Africa and her responsibilities include Medical Affairs (CNS, Immunology, Oncology and TB), Regulatory Affairs and Quality Assurance. She is the Chairperson of the Industry Task Groups that communicates with the South Africa Regulatory Authority on behalf of the industry and chairs the ITG/SAHPRA backlog working group. Her role within J&J Global Public health now includes TB, mental health and HIV. She has been collaborating with the South African government and National TB programme to provide access to Sirturo (bedaquiline) and worked with many implementing partners to strengthen MDR TB health care systems in South Africa including the Oto-Toxicity programme which resulted in SA moving to an injection-free MDR TB regimen, providing training of health care professionals and upgrading the NTP electronic MDR TB register.

