

## **Focus on Mental Health**

### **Our Initiatives – Concept Note**

Gynecological practice in all cultures has always been affected by folklore, taboos, and religious and civil sanctions to control and regulate sexual activity and reproduction. The gynecologist is a primary care physician for women, often from childhood across the life cycle - from menarche through adolescence, young adulthood, pregnancy, menopause, and old age. To perform function well, gynecologists need to know about the psycho-sexual as well as the physical development of women. Gynecologists need to be sensitive to their own attitudes, values, prejudices, and personality, and they must understand how these characteristics will influence their practice and their patient's decision to trust and work collaboratively with them.

An insight into the patient's basic life situation and knowing something about her work and social situations is important. Serious illnesses almost universally produce depression; the affected individual feels loss of control and seems helpless to stop onrushing events. Those emotions work their way from brain into hormonal and immune functions, intensifying the underlying problem with consequent deepening of helplessness and depression.

The science and art of medicine converge at a point, where physicians become basically concerned with the whole of the human condition. The most important development in modern medicine is the recognition of a biochemistry of the emotions, underwritten by fast-accumulating evidence of specific interactions between the brain and the endocrine and immune systems. Many contemporary medical researchers believe that bacteriological, viral, and other organisms are a secondary and not a primary cause of illness.

We strongly suggest, and our initiatives are focusing on strengthening effective leadership and governance. The Women's Health and Education Center's (WHEC's) core mental health action plan objectives are:

1. To strengthen effective leadership and governance for mental health;
2. To provide comprehensive, integrated and responsive mental health and social care services in community-based settings;
3. To implement strategies for promotion and prevention in mental health;
4. To strengthen information systems, evidence and research for mental health.

Considerable efforts have been expended by WHEC for advocacy and improvement in affordable mental health services availability worldwide. Successful coordination of mental health services involves many actors both within and beyond the health sector and enables strengthening of care pathways. **IT REQUIRES STRONG LEADERSHIP.**

Join our efforts, we welcome everyone!