

# MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS: WELCOME TO 2017 A NEW YEAR OF MENTAL WELLNESS

Welcome to the first edition of Mental Health Matters for 2017. We are looking forward to a year of inspiration, education, awareness as well as Mental Wellness.

The MHM team held two very positive meetings with GPs last year who gave us some interesting suggestions and topics for the publication – so watch out for some exciting changes to this year's magazine.

One of these is a monthly feature written by international mental health experts. This month, we feature Dr Mark Zimmerman's interview on anti-depressant treatment of depression: "What you may know is not always true."

Dr Zimmerman is the Director of Outpatient Psychiatry and the Partial Hospital Programme at Rhode Island Hospital in Providence, USA. He is also the Professor of psychiatry and human behaviour at The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University.

Look out also for the article on 'Weight Gain and Psychiatric Medication' in this issue. Written by Dr Renata Schoeman, a psychiatrist in private practice, the article will shed light on the concern patients have when it comes to gaining weight whilst on psychiatric medication and how to help the patient overcome this.

Psychiatric and emotional issues in children is on the increase and this month's edition features a must-read article by Dr Helen Clark on anxiety in children. Dr Clark is the Head of the Psychiatric Unit at Baragwanath Hospital and she provides us with invaluable insights into the anxiety and stress faced by South African children.

This magazine is aimed at GPs, especially since we're very aware they are often the first point of contact for people needing help for mental and emotional illness. Globally, GPs play a pivotal role in the provision of mental healthcare. All the more so in South Africa, where mental health resources are severely limited. GPs often don't have enough time for updating their training in mental health so this year, SADAG will be supporting more GP training initiatives. It's imperative that general practitioners are trained on Mental Health so they know how to identify at-risk patients, support those affected by mental health issues, and know where to refer them.

If you believe your practice or area has doctors who need more training in specific mental health areas they may not experience so often like trichotillomania; suicide prevention; chronic illness and depression, or how to negotiate with medical schemes, please contact us.

The Mental Health Matters journal team values questions, comments and suggestions by our readers, so that the magazine becomes more valuable with every edition, so do let us know your thoughts.

We look forward to working more closely with you all in 2017.



**Zane Wilson (ms)**

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