



Social Justice  
for People with  
Mental Illness



WPA  
World Psychiatric  
Association



World Mind Matters Day  
5<sup>th</sup> September 2016

## BILL OF RIGHTS FOR PERSONS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS

The World Psychiatric Association (WPA), a global organization representing nearly 250 000 psychiatrists, urges ALL Governments to ensure that persons with mental illness/mental disability/mental health problems are not discriminated against based on their mental health status, and are treated as full citizens enjoying all rights on an equal basis with other citizens.

The WPA supports the efforts of the international community as expressed through various international human rights Covenants and Conventions, and, more particularly, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). The WPA reiterates that persons with mental illness/mental disability/ mental health problems have the capacity to hold rights and exercise their rights and should, therefore, be treated on an equal basis with other citizens. This includes, but is not limited to:

1. Right to **accessible** and **affordable** mental and physical healthcare;
2. Right to live **independently** in the community as other citizens;
3. Right to **work** and **opportunities** to work and **protections** at work, including **affirmative action**, as available to other citizens;
4. Right to **adequate** income to meet their basic needs for food, housing, clothing and other basic necessities;
5. Right to **accessible, integrated, affordable** housing;
6. Right to **training** and **education** as available to other citizens;
7. Right to **freedom of movement** and **removal** of restrictions on free travel.
8. Right to **own, inherit**, and **dispose** of property, and to be provided **adequate support** to exercise this right;
9. Right to **marry, have** and **adopt** children, and **raise** families, with additional support when required;
10. Right to **determine** their future and make their **own life choices**;
11. Right to **vote** and be **elected** to public office;
12. Right to be recognized as **equal** before the law as other citizens, and the right to **full protection** of the law;
13. Right to be **free** from **cruel, inhuman, degrading treatment**, and **punishment**;
14. Right to **confidentiality** and **privacy**; and
15. Right to **participate** in the **cultural** and **social life** of the community and **practise a religion** of their choice.

### DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

The author is President of the World Psychiatric Association and has no conflicts of interest to report. The author alone is responsible for the content and writing of the paper.

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