

MEDICAL WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION
WESTERN PACIFIC REGION

The Medical Women's International Association was represented by the Philippine Medical Women's Association led by Dr. Perla Dolera, current president of the Philippine Medical Women's Association, and Dr. Rosa Maria H. Nancho, PMWA representative to the MWIA – WESPAC at the 65th Session of the World Health Organization – Regional Committee for the Western Pacific. 37 countries were represented. MWIA released a statement on Domestic and Sexual Violence

Opening session was graced by no less than the President of the Phils, Mr. Benigno C. Aquino III and the Secretary of Health, Dr. Enrique Ona. Dr. Shin Young-Soo, Director General of WPRO, gave his opening remarks and led the delegation in the discussion of various topics. Focus was made especially on Non-communicable Diseases and the Ebola crisis.

According to the Regional director, the Ebola crisis spotlights the world's inequalities. Rumor and panic spread faster than the virus. Fear has caused disruption and economic losses. When the virus hits the destitute population, the whole world suffers. There has been decades of neglected fundamental health systems. This can bring fragile countries down to their knees. One cannot build health systems during a crisis. The failure to place basic infrastructures in place during times when there is no crisis is noteworthy. The world is ill-prepared to respond to these epidemics. He emphasized that we must **invest in health security in normal times**. It will prepare us better for emergencies like Ebola; although the likelihood for spread of Ebola is low in the Western Pacific, we should exert global solidarity and heightened response.

The end of the Millennium Development goal is fast approaching in 2015 but some countries have missed their target. All but 3 countries have eliminated Maternal tetanus in the Western Pacific. There is a rise in more resistant strains of Malaria. Emergency and disasters have become a threat to global health security.

WHO must build on its successes while being flexible and adaptable and become an effective manager of financial and human resources.

The Tobacco Free Regional Plan for 2015 -2019

- Goal is to reduce tobacco prevalence to 10% IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC REGION.
- Regulations are needed on chewed tobacco, the electronic nicotine delivery system and trade should be a platform for developing programs to curtail tobacco use and importation.
- There is illicit trade of tobacco products – the increase in excise duty on the cost of cigarettes will increase illicit trade. Hence cross-boundary smuggling should be controlled.

Mental and Substance use Disorders

The burden and impact of mental health are: individual, societal, and economic. There is reduced life expectancy on mental health disorders.

Key messages:

1. it is unacceptable that so few people with mental illness receive any effective treatment
2. Prioritize mental health care because it causes high rates of mortality and morbidity in all societies
3. WHO mhGAP intervention Guide provides effective and affordable treatment guidance for general health care staff in low and middle income countries.
4. Task sharing makes accessible care and greater coverage possible

Other papers presented were by: GAVI, International Alliance of Patients' Organization, WONCA, Asian Development Bank, International Spinal Cord Society, International Federation of Medical Students' Alliance, NCD Alliance, International Atomic Energy Association, and Handicap International.

Reported by:

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