

# Promoting peace and preparedness: Looking ahead to the 3rd Global Public Health Week

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The Global Public Health Week (GPHW), organized by the World Federation of Public Health Associations (WFPHA), marks a pivotal moment for the global public health community. As we emerge from the shadows of the COVID-19 pandemic, the significance of public health has never been more pronounced. This year, under the theme 'Fostering Peace as a Prerequisite for Equitable Health', GPHW not only celebrates the resilient spirit of the public health workforce but also casts a spotlight on the critical intersections of peace, health equity, and pandemic preparedness.

Public health has long served as our collective safeguard, quietly averting crises and nurturing the well-being of communities worldwide. However, the recent pandemic has brought this area into the spotlight, underlining the essential role of public health in our lives. Yet, as the immediate threat of COVID-19 recedes, we face the danger of complacency. The journey ahead requires us to capitalize on the current momentum to strengthen our preparedness against future health emergencies. Visibility, understanding, and global collaboration in public health are essential to prepare us for the challenges ahead.

The third occurrence of GPHW, set to commence on 8 April 2024, embodies a commitment to these principles. Combining face-to-face and digital forums, the week offers a range of opportunities to share ideas, strategies and innovations. Each day is dedicated to a specific sub-theme, ranging from reimagining public health paradigms to integrating mental well-being into health agendas, from promoting sustainable living to preparing the next generation of health professionals. This diverse agenda reflects a holistic approach to health and well-being, emphasizing the interconnectedness of our global community.

The highlight events of GPHW 2024, the opening and

closing ceremonies, embrace the week's core messages. The opening ceremony, led by Luis Eugenio De Souza, WFPHA President, and Bettina Borisch, WFPHA Executive Director, will delve into the crucial role of peace in achieving health equity. Featuring eminent speakers from diverse health sector backgrounds, including Abdullah Al-Harthy, Oman focal point for the Global Health & Peace Initiative, Unni Karunakara, former international president of Médecins Sans Frontières; Duha Shellah, representing the youth voice from the WFPHA; and Fernando Sacoto, former president of the Ecuadorian Society of Public Health and current executive secretary of Alliance of Public Health Associations of the Americas, the panel discussion is uniquely positioned to provide in-depth information on how public health can play a central role in promoting peace.

The closing ceremony, with theme 'Strengthening Preparedness for the Next Pandemic: Are We Ready?', brings into focus the urgent need for robust pandemic preparedness. The session, chaired by Emma Rawson, WFPHA president-elect, features a keynote on the negotiations for a pandemic treaty by Jaouad Mahjour, Head of WHO Secretariat to INB and IHR Amendments. A panel discussion will take place, featuring a lineup of global health experts, including: Raji Tajudeen, Acting Deputy Director-General of the Africa CDC; Wu Fan, President of the Shanghai Preventive Medicine Association and Deputy Dean of Shanghai Medical College at Fudan University; and Bettina Borisch, Executive Director of the WFPHA. The panel discussion will follow the keynote address to set out a strategic vision focused on building resilience and preparing global health for the future.

As we look toward GPHW 2024, the call to action is clear – 'We must foster peace, enhance global health governance, prioritize mental well-being, advocate for sustainable

communities, and nurture competent health professionals'. Only through a united front we can face the uncertainties of the future with confidence. As we engage in this global dialogue, let us remain committed to the vision of a healthier, more equitable world, fortified against the threats of tomorrow.

**CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

The author has completed and submitted the ICMJE Form for Disclosure of Potential Conflicts of Interest and none was reported.

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**ETHICAL APPROVAL AND INFORMED CONSENT**

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**DATA AVAILABILITY**

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**PROVENANCE AND PEER REVIEW**

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**DISCLAIMER**

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author.