Global Mental Health In The Era Of COVID-19 Pandemic
Friday, 11th December, 2020 from 16.00 -17.30 (CET)

According to World Health Organization (WHO), about a billion people are currently living with mental disorders. Three million people die every year from the harmful use of alcohol and one person dies by suicide every 40 seconds. In the last few months, billions of people around the globe have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, which is further having a profound impact on mental wellbeing in so many people. Yet, mental health is one of the most neglected areas of public health in our time and large number of people have no access to quality mental health services. People in low-resourced countries have been particularly affected with more than 75% of individuals with mental, neurological and substance use disorders receiving no treatment at all for their conditions. In addition, stigma, discrimination, punitive legislation and human rights abuses against individuals with mental health disorders are still rampant. Researchers have a part to play in creating an evidence-base to inform agenda-setting and interventions and strategies to address mental health. The APH-participating institutes are committed to collaborate in this field and several of our institutes already contribute to global evidence-based through their research. This Webinar is organised by APH-Global Health section to enhance the visibility of the Global Mental Health research within Amsterdam UMC internationally and to stimulate collaborations between AMC/UVA and VUmc/VU by bringing together leading scholars from WHO (Dr Mark van Ommeren) and Amsterdam UMC (Dr Marit Sijbrandij & Prof. Claudi Bockting) to discuss some key perspectives on global mental health and the current ongoing projects within Amsterdam UMC. The meeting will be chaired by Prof. Charles Agyemang & Dr. Marjolein Dieleman.

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16.00 –16.05: Welcome and scene setting – Prof. Charles Agyemang, Amsterdam UMC, University of Amsterdam, & Dr Marjolein Dieleman, Amsterdam UMC, VU University, Amsterdam, the Netherlands

16.05-16.25: Global mental health: current progress and priorities – Dr Mark van Ommeren, Head of the Mental Health Unit, World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland

16.25-16.45: Effective psychosocial interventions to address common mental disorders in global settings – Dr Marit Sijbrandij, Department of Clinical, Neuro- and Developmental Psychology & Co-Director of the WHO collaborating Center for Research and Dissemination of Psychological Interventions, VU University Amsterdam, the Netherlands

16.45-17.05: Digital interventions in mental health - Prof. Claudi Bockting, Amsterdam UMC & Co-Director of the Centre for Urban Mental Health, University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands

17.05-17.25: Plenary discussion of the way forward for Global Mental Health in Amsterdam UMC

17.25-17.30: Closing remarks – Prof. Charles Agyemang, Amsterdam UMC, University of Amsterdam, & Dr Marjolein Dieleman, Amsterdam UMC, VU University, Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

About Keynote Speakers & Chairs

**Dr Mark van Ommeren**

Dr Mark van Ommeren is Head of the Mental Health Unit within the WHO Department of Mental Health and Substance Use. The Unit covers a wide range of topics including assessment and management of mental disorders across the life course, innovation and research in psychological interventions, suicide prevention, mental health in specific settings (e.g. the workplace, humanitarian emergencies), mental health economics, and epidemiology. Over the last decade, Dr van Ommeren’s work has mainly focused on developing inter-agency mental health policy for humanitarian settings with linked implementation tools; developing, testing and disseminating a range of scalable psychological interventions; and “building back better” mental health services across different levels of the health system after major emergencies.
**Associate Professor Marit Sijbrandij**

Dr. Marit Sijbrandij is an Associate Professor at the Department of Clinical, Neuro- and Developmental Psychology at VU University, Amsterdam, the Netherlands, and Director of the WHO Collaborating Center at VU University. She has completed multiple trials, among which trials evaluating the effectiveness of early cognitive behavioral therapy for acute posttraumatic disorder (PTSD), internet-based prevention of PTSD, and the effects of Psychological First Aid training for health care workers in Sierra Leone. She was involved as co-investigator in three previous studies on the scalable World Health Organization mental health programs in Pakistan and Kenya. Currently, Marit Sijbrandij is coordinator of the EU H2020 STRENGTHS project, that evaluates the effectiveness of the scalable WHO programs for Syrian refugees across countries in Europe and the Middle East. In addition, she is coordinator of the recently funded EU H2020 RESPOND project, that is aimed at evaluating remotely delivered stepped care programs to improve wellbeing and reduce psychological distress among individuals affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown. She is also involved many other studies, such as a trial on the effects of an innovative intervention using eye movements in the treatment of suicidal imagery in depressed suicidal patients.

**Professor Claudi Bockting**

Prof. Claudi Bockting is a professor of Clinical Psychology in Psychiatry at Amsterdam UMC, together with her research team she focuses on common mental health disorders (such as depression). She is the director of the Centre for Urban Mental Health at the University of Amsterdam, together with prof. Reinout Wiers. She studies potentially modifiable factors of onset, recurrence and chronicity using an interdisciplinary approach. As a fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study (UvA-IAS) she studied the use of complex systems models in order to explore new targets for prevention, treatment and relapse prevention of mental disorders. Additionally, as a fellow at the World Health Organization (WHO), she studied the possibilities of using technology to increase the accessibility of effective psychological interventions worldwide. Besides, she works as a clinical psychologist at the Psychiatry Department of UvA-AMC. Her research program focuses on the following topics: Understanding etiological and maintenance factors in depression and related common mental health disorders using a complex systems approach; Developing innovative multimodal psychological interventions (i.e. combined with technological devices and pharmacological treatments) and evaluating the effect in RCT’s and micro RCT’s (using ecological momentary assessment); and Increasing accessibility of effective psychological interventions in low and middle income countries using technology.

**Professor Charles Agyemang**

Prof. Charles Agyemang is a Professor of Global Migration, Ethnicity and Health and Principal Investigator at Amsterdam UMC, University of Amsterdam. His research is focused on ethnic inequalities in cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) and NCDs in low- and middle-income countries. Prof. Agyemang has about 20 years research experience and has authored/co-authored over 280 published papers, and edited several books. He is the PI of the RODAM study – European Commission funded project on gene-environmental interaction on obesity & diabetes among African migrants. He is a fellow of the prestigious European Research Council (ERC) under the Consolidation Award programme. Prof. Agyemang is currently the Vice President of the Migrant Health section of the European Public health Association and Scientific Chair of the Global Society of Migration, Ethnicity, Race & Health. He is an Associate Editor for Internal and Emergency Medicine, and serves as an Editorial Board member for several journals. He was member of the WHO taskforce on NCDs in Migrant and was a member and a rapporteur of the Planning Committee for WHO Global Consultation on Migrant Health.

**Associate Professor Marjolein Dieleman**

Dr. Marjolein Dieleman is Associate professor Global Health and Health Systems at the Athena Institute at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (VU). The Athena Institute believes that science should actively contribute to a healthy, inclusive and sustainable world. As a scientific research and education institute, Athena pursues this vision by analysing and integrating diverse perspectives and enabling joint action. Next to her work at Athena, Dr. Dieleman is senior advisor Health Systems and Human Resources for Health (HRH) at the Health Unit of the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) in Amsterdam and director of WHO collaborating center for Human
Resources for Health at KIT. She has over 25 years of experience in research on health systems in low- and middle-income countries. Key research areas include participatory action and theory-based research on complex health systems issues, with a special focus on governance and accountability, and the health workforce in low- and middle income countries. Current research focuses on scale-up of public health interventions, on health governance arrangements at community level, on maternal health systems and management and planning of the maternal health workforce in Sub-Saharan Africa and on health workforce mobility in Europe. Dr. Dieleman is associate editor of the Human Resources for Health Journal.