

Oral presentation

Depressive disorders and public health

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Depressive disorders are a major public health problem because they are frequent, can have severe consequences if left untreated and are likely to increase in absolute and relative numbers in the future. Although treatments of proven efficacy exist the majority of people with depression do not receive any treatment for their illness.

The relatively low priority that the public health authorities and the general public give to the development of services that could provide adequate treatment for people with depressive disorders has several reasons. One of the most important is the manner in which the information about depression is presented by the mental health professions. Ways of improving this situation will be presented as an introduction to the discussion by the participants in the Round Table and by the audience.