

ADDICTIONS SECTION

By Alberto Trimboli

We know that belief systems determine the way that a society operates, especially in the extensive field of mental health, where they create stigmatizing processes that give rise to prejudice and discrimination.

In everyday clinical practice — in this case, treating people with problematic substance use issues — what stands out is how the worldview that has been constructed by certain elements of the power structure — particularly those concerned with morals, law, and religion — influences professionals' worldviews. This leads to the implementation of approaches that are essentially based on confinement, authoritarianism, and practices lacking any scientific grounding, which are often ethically questionable and, in the majority of cases, violate the most basic human rights.

One of the fundamental objectives of this Section of the WFMH is to work to eliminate the stigmatization and discrimination of drug users in the healthcare system and in the mental health system in particular. In order to do this, it is necessary to break away from the school of thought that currently predominates, which says that the only option available to people who suffer from this problem is internment. It is also necessary to change society's outlook, which associates these people with criminality, poverty, and violence.

The Addictions Section will address this issue from perspectives associated with the fields of clinical practice, education, and research and emphasize its biosocial and psychosocial aspects.

Therefore, we will organize courses, research projects, and presentations to be given at regional and international congresses.

The Addictions Section of the WFMH invites all interested parties to work together with this Section to raise awareness of this issue.

Dr. Alberto Trimboli.

Chair, Addictions Section