World Health Day 2017, celebrated on 7 April every year to mark the anniversary of the founding of the World Health Organization, provides a unique opportunity to mobilize action around a specific health topic of concern to people all over the world. The theme of World Health Day 2017 campaign is depression, and the slogan is ‘Depression-let’s talk’.

Globally, around 350 million people of all ages, from all walks of life, suffer from depression. It causes mental anguish and impacts on people’s ability to carry out even the simplest everyday tasks, with sometimes devastating consequences for relationships with family and friends. At its worst, depression can lead to suicide, now the second leading cause of death in 15-29-year olds.

General and specific objectives

The overall goal of the campaign is that more people with depression, in all countries, seek and get help.

More specifically, it is aimed at creating a better informed general public on depression, its causes and possible consequences, including suicide, and help available for prevention and treatment; encouraging people with depression to seek help; and facilitating support to family, friends and colleagues of people living with depression.

At the core of the campaign is the importance of talking about depression as a vital component of recovery. The stigma surrounding mental illness, including depression, remains a barrier to people seeking help throughout the world.

While the World Health Day 2017 campaign is broad-based, the focus is on vulnerable population, including demographic vulnerability (young people, women, elderly), geographical and financial vulnerability etc.

Overcoming the stigma associated with depression will lead to more people seeking help.

Dr Sanghamitra Ghosh
**Symptoms We Ignore**

American National Institute of Mental Health lists following as symptoms:

- Persistent sad, anxious, or "empty" mood
- Feelings of hopelessness, pessimism, guilt, worthlessness
- Loss of interest or pleasure in hobbies and activities
- Loss of interest in activities or hobbies once pleasurable
- Decreased energy, fatigue
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering, making decisions
- Difficulty sleeping or oversleeping
- Appetite and/or weight changes
- Thoughts of death or suicide; suicide attempts
- Persistent headaches, cramps, digestive problems

**Depression Prevention**

Depression is a curable condition, however, some forms of depression may not be preventable.

However, the recent research confirms that depression may be prevented with healthy lifestyle changes.

Depression is one of the lifestyle diseases and can be prevented by:

- A healthy diet
- Regular exercise
- Taking time out for fun and relaxation
- Not overworking and
- Time Management Skills
- Routine health checkup

"By and large, primary care practices don't have the infrastructure or haven't chosen to implement [best] practices for depression."

Data compiled by Dr. Manisha Sarkar, Dr. Anirban Dalui

**IPHA activities and participation in different Events**

Secretary General IPHA at 15th World Congress on Public Health 2017 at Melbourne, Australia (above)

World Health Day celebration at Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh (below)