



Circular No. LC 2 (2019)

To PSI affiliates in the Health and Social Services  
sector

To all PSI staff for information

Contact: [Baba.Aye@world-psi.org](mailto:Baba.Aye@world-psi.org)

25 March 2019

## PSI: Commemorating World Health Day 2019

### *Introduction*

7 April has been celebrated since 1950 as World Health Day (WHD). This is to commemorate the founding of the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1947, and quite importantly to draw global attention to important issues in international health. WHO provides institutional leadership for WHD as a global health awareness day. This includes setting a theme.

In recent years, alternative themes have been chosen by PSI. For example, in 2017 while we made interventions on the important theme: “Depression: Let’s Talk”, we also promoted our alternative theme: “Our Health Is Not for Sale”. This was in line with our global campaign for the Human Right to Health launched four months earlier on 12/12/2016. The 2018 theme “Health for All” was in sync with our perspectives: we supported it, stressing the centrality of universal access to quality public health to achieve [Health for All NOW](#)<sup>1</sup>.

The thematic position for the 2019 WHD is more fluid than in earlier years. It is not summed up as a slogan. Rather, WHO says “(t)his year’s World Health Day will focus on equity and solidarity”<sup>2</sup>. It goes further to explicitly say [WHO is focusing on universal health coverage for this year’s World Health Day, on 7 April](#).<sup>3</sup> The aim of this focus on UHC is “[to help people better understand](#) what universal health coverage means – what services and support should be available and where”.<sup>4</sup>

This is a welcome foothold, which PSI affiliates can stand on to call for **Universal Public Health Care**.

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.world-psi.org/en/health-all-marking-2018-world-health-day>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.who.int/campaigns/world-health-day/world-health-day-2019/solidarity-chain>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.who.int/campaigns/world-health-day/world-health-day-2019>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.who.int/campaigns/world-health-day/world-health-day-2019/about-the-campaign>

## **Activities and Key messages**

From our earlier experiences, it is difficult to have synchronised actions by affiliates in different regions and countries. However, we can do different things – but still boldly put forward our shared key messages. Our messages build on the those of the WHO, with the argument for Universal Public Health Care at its core:

### **Key messages**

- Health is a human right; it's time for health for all;
- Universal health care is possible, only with public healthcare delivery
- Everybody should have access to quality public health services they need, when and where they need them;
- **People Over Profit** - at least half of the global population do not receive the health services they need, because profit comes before people's needs. We must change this;
- About 100 million people are pushed into extreme poverty each year because of out-of-pocket spending on health, - we demand universal access to quality public health care, free at the point of service
- Quality health care delivery requires decent work for health workers
- Quality, accessible primary health care is the foundation for universal health care;
- Health workers, patients and communities united for health over profit: governments should tax corporations more to fund public health for all;
- Government expenditure in health is investment for the future: well-funded public health for all, now!
- Safe and effective staffing for health requires improved health employment
- Unsafe and low-quality health care ruins lives and costs the world trillions of dollars every year. Public authorities must ensure improved quality and safety of health services globally.

### **Activities**

Possible activities that affiliates might want to organise singly or in collaboration with other unions and/or civil society organisations include:

- Demonstrations: in form of rallies, processions etc
- Media briefings/statements
- Workshops/seminars/guest lectures
- Petitions/signature campaigns to policy makers/legislators
- Community outreach programmes

### **Publicise!**

To project power as health workers – and thus be better placed to influence policy, we must present the stories of our activities to the world and amplify them with our international solidarity.

- Let us know what activities you have lined up for the day;
- Send in stories of your activities - we will put these up on the PSI website and have stories that bring these together in the next *Right to Health Quarterly*. Please send:
  - Pictures
  - Articles
  - Notes
  - And more pictures!

### ***Social media***

Through social media we can together reach millions of people across the world. From 1 April, we will commence a publicity blitz to put PSI on the media sphere spotlight for the WHD.

And we encourage you to get the hashtag **#PublicHealth4All** trending. The WHO's #HealthForAll hashtag could be used as well, but behind this hides a blurring of the lines between public and private/for-profit health care delivery.

The Head Office will circulate a poster and other communication materials to affiliates ahead of the day for your use.