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UCT Inaugural Lecture to raise awareness on mental health in low and middle-income countries

Issues of mental health are particularly neglected in Africa. Africans face many challenges, including intractable poverty, infectious diseases, maternal and child mortality, as well as conflict, but the importance of mental health is often overlooked.

Absence of treatment is the norm rather than the exception across the continent. The “treatment gap” – the proportion of people with mental illness who don’t get treatment – ranges from 75% in South Africa to more than 90% in Ethiopia and Nigeria.

Investment in mental health into primary care will be discussed when the University of Cape Town hosts the Vice-Chancellor’s Inaugural Lecture titled “10 reasons to invest in population mental health in low and middle-income countries”.

The lecture, will take place on Wednesday, 24 May 2018, 17:30 at the New Learning Centre Lecture Theatre, Anatomy Building at the Faculty of Health Science. It will be presented by Professor Crick Lund of the Department of Psychiatry and Mental Health.

In his lecture, Professor Lund’s inaugural lecture will draw on his research and policy engagement work over the past 20 years to present the case for investing in population mental health in low and middle-income countries. The lecture will draw on studies of the epidemiology of mental disorders, health economics, human rights, mental health services, and evaluations of novel interventions and delivery mechanisms.

Notes to editors

Professor Lund is currently the Chief Operating Officer of the Programme for Improving Mental health care (PRIME), a Department for International Development (DFID) funded research consortium focusing on the integration of mental health into primary care in low resource settings in Ethiopia, India, Nepal, South Africa and Uganda. He is also the Principal Investigator of the Africa Focus on Intervention Research for Mental health (AFFIRM) U19, National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) Collaborative Hub. He is the founding member of the Alan J Flisher Centre for Public Mental Health at UCT and served as its first Director from 2010 to 2017. His research interests lie in mental health policy, service planning and the relationship between poverty and mental health in low and middle-income countries.

ENDS

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