



Clubhouse International

Creating Community: Changing the World of Mental Health

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Clubhouse International World Seminar Convenes Keynote Speaker, Dévora Kestel, World Health Organization

New York, New York, 17 September 2022 – [Clubhouse International](#), a global organization working to end social and economic isolation for people with mental illness, is hosting **The Clubhouse International World Seminar 2022** from September 17 through September 22, 2022. The event is being co-hosted by B'More Clubhouse.

The five-day Seminar will be held in Baltimore, Maryland, USA, drawing more than 600 participants from 15 countries, 32 U.S. states, nearly 170 community mental health programs known as “Clubhouses”, and several global mental health organizations and stakeholders. The Seminar will provide an opportunity for education, dialog and sharing of best practices developed by Clubhouse International’s Clubhouse community, which are aimed at helping people living with mental illness around the world regain a respected place in society through work, education, wellness and community. Participants will have the opportunity to learn more about the global mental health landscape, how to strengthen Clubhouse Employment Programs and community partnerships, how to strengthen and diversify Boards, best practices for welcoming new members, and so much more.

Clubhouse International is honored to welcome Dévora Kestel, Director of Mental Health and Substance Use, [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#) as the Seminar keynote speaker. In her remarks, Ms. Kestel is expected to speak about *WHO Mental Health Action Plan* and the role the Clubhouses can play in helping to change and improve the global mental health landscape as the Clubhouse Model is an important component of mental health service systems worldwide.

Clubhouse International is pleased to share that Melissa Harris, Deputy Director for the Disabled and Elderly Health Programs Group, **Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services** will join a roundtable discussion focused on how Medicaid funding works with Clubhouses. Ms. Harris works with Clubhouse International to help better understand US Medicaid funding and bridge gaps for Clubhouses seeking Medicaid funding in their respective states.

The Clubhouse Model for psycho-social rehabilitation is an evidence-based practice with a 75-year history of offering successful and cost-effective solutions for people living with mental illness. The Model is recognized by the **World Health Organization** as an example of a rights-based, recovery-oriented approach to recovery. Clubhouse International is the 2014 recipient of the **Hilton Humanitarian Award** and the 2021 recipient of the **American Psychiatric Association’s Special Presidential Commendation Award**.

Today, there are over 330 Clubhouses operating on all six continents. Clubhouse International manages the accreditation quality assurance process of the global Clubhouse network, provides comprehensive training, mentors Startup groups, promotes expansion of the Clubhouse Model, and



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leads advocacy campaigns encouraging greater awareness of mental health around the world and greater investment by key stakeholders in community mental health services.

Why Mental Health? The World Health Organization estimates that *more than 450 million people worldwide live with some kind of mental or neurological disorder; Depression is the leading cause of disability worldwide and is a major contributor to the overall global burden of disease (WHO). An estimated 703,000 people die by suicide worldwide each year; Globally, suicide is the fourth leading cause of death in 15-29-year-olds (WHO).* Although mental illness is prevalent in all societies and can affect anyone, reaching as many as one in four people, there is a serious gap between the number of people living with mental illness and the number of people receiving treatment and support.

Clubhouse International works to mitigate the challenges for people living with mental illness and advocates for greater investment in community mental health services. We envision a world where there is a Clubhouse in every community. There is no health without mental health.

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For more information about Clubhouse programs that offer opportunities for mental health recovery to people around the world, visit <https://clubhouse-intl.org/what-we-do/overview/>.

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