

News RELEASE

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APA Supports Global Medical Ethics Day & the WorldScopes Initiative

Arlington, Va. – The American Psychiatric Association (APA) joins with national medical association members of the World Medical Association (WMA) to honor the first ever global Medical Ethics Day on Saturday, September 18, 2004.

Global Medical Ethics Day was established by the WMA in October 2003 to highlight and promote the presence of ethics in medicine. It is a day dedicated to the importance of increasing awareness and fostering interest in exploring what medical ethics means to physicians and what ethics bring to the quality of health care for current and future patients. The date was chosen to commemorate the first General Assembly meeting of the WMA on September 18, 1947.

In commemoration of global Medical Ethics Day, the APA also supports the American Medical Association's (AMA) WorldScopes initiative – a project that collects and distributes stethoscopes to physicians and other healthcare professionals around the world. Many medical professionals lack access to even the most basic medical instruments. Over the last year, WorldScopes has provided thousands of stethoscopes to hospitals and medical schools and clinics around the world.

"Groups like the WMA and the American Medical Association (AMA) should be commended for the inception of global Medical Ethics Day and projects like WorldScopes," said Spencer Eth, M.D., chair of the APA Committee on Ethics. "Ethical treatment practices and quality care is of the utmost importance to everyone in the healthcare community. The APA proudly endorses any event that advocates for quality patient care and enhancement of the medical profession around the world."

In an effort to ensure consistent ethical standards, the APA endorses the ethical guidelines set forth by the *Principles of Medical Ethics, with Annotations Especially Applicable to Psychiatry*, along with the *Code of Medical Ethics*, prepared by the AMA Council on Ethical and Judicial Affairs. The APA's nearly 36,000 U.S. and international member physicians work together to ensure humane care and effective treatment for all persons with mental disorders.

To find out more about global Medical Ethics Day, visit the WMA's web site at www.wma.net. To find out more about WorldScopes, or to make a donation, visit the AMA's WorldScopes web site at www.worldscopes.org.

The American Psychiatric Association is a national medical specialty society, founded in 1844, whose more than 35,000 physician members specialize in the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of mental illnesses including substance use disorders. For more information, visit the APA Web site at www.psych.org

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