

Charter

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DEFINITION AND SCOPE Behavioral medicine can be defined as the interdisciplinary field concerned with the development and integration of psychosocial, behavioral and biomedical knowledge relevant to health and illness and the application of this knowledge to prevention, etiology, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation. The scope of "behavioral medicine" extends from research efforts to understand fundamental biobehavioral mechanisms; to clinical diagnosis and intervention; to disease prevention and health promotion. The International Society of Behavioral Medicine (ISBM) is intended to serve the needs of all health-related disciplines concerned with the integration of psychosocial behavioral and biomedical sciences.

GOALS The goals of the ISBM shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following:

- To encourage formation of national or regional organizations of behavioral medicine, and to develop and maintain liaison with related professional organizations.
- To encourage and co-ordinate communication and interaction among various health professionals including biomedical and behavioral science researchers and clinicians, without regard to specific discipline loyalties.
- To stimulate research, clinical, preventive and training activities through formal meetings, collaborative undertakings and awards for meritorious effort.
- To develop guidelines for implementation of behavioral medicine training and research activities at various levels in the health sciences.
- To serve as an information resource for behavioral medicine by facilitating access to scientific and professional journals computer-based information systems, and organization of scientific meetings/conferences.

STRUCTURE Consistent with its charter objective of encouraging the development of national or regional societies of behavioral medicine, the ISBM will function principally as a federation of such societies. The membership of this federation will be of two types: *Full Membership* for national or regional societies whose composition and objectives are consistent with the goals of the International Society, and *Affiliate Membership* for organizations with interests relevant to behavioral medicine but which do not meet all criteria (detailed in the bylaws) for full

membership. Affiliate member organizations are entitled to limited benefits but are not eligible to vote on the Governing Council.

FUNCTIONS OF ISBM

Information dissemination The ISBM will promote effective international communication between both individuals and national groups to facilitate research, clinical and training activities on a worldwide basis. The ISBM will endeavor to overcome the uneven distribution of scientific and clinical information and the formidable barriers that exist to timely access to existing information sources in most parts of the world. The ISBM will make efforts to establish a world-wide communication system for technology transfer and information dissemination which will keep pace with this rapidly developing field.

Education and training One of the tasks of the ISBM is to assist in the preparation of curricula and course synopses for teachers in medical and behavioral science educational institutions. It is also intended to organize relevant teaching workshops and courses, where possible in connection with conferences and in co-operation with national and regional societies and organizations. By these efforts to promote education and training, the ISBM will contribute to a better understanding of integrative mechanisms which play an important role in overcoming the limits of the specialized disciplines of health care and in developing rational prevention and therapy for life-style and stress-related disorders.

The development of national and regional (i.e., multinational) societies The ISBM believes that the growth of research and practice of behavioral medicine throughout the world can best be promoted through the formation of national and regional societies. The ISBM therefore seeks to foster the establishment of new behavioral medicine societies in terms of increasing the interdisciplinary nature of their membership and activities. It is proposed that the formation of new societies can best be encouraged by creating links with existing health-related scientific organizations in each country or region, in order to develop a multidisciplinary professional group with common interests in behavioral medicine. The ISBM recognizes the need to be sensitive to the cultural and scientific background in different parts of the world and to the fact that the scientific groups currently concerned with behavioral medicine vary across nations. Nevertheless, it is believed that national and regional behavioral medicine societies must endeavor to develop multidisciplinary membership and not become the preserve of any single discipline.

International collaborative research The ISBM will attempt to stimulate cooperative and cross-cultural research within the behavioral medicine area. The ISBM will function as a channel and source of information for researchers who wish to set up these kinds of studies and will also attempt to stimulate support for such studies. Information will be available through the ISBM for these purposes. In addition, national and international conferences will be used as mutual meetings points for groups that are involved in co-operative effort. One possibility will be to set aside

specific sections of international meetings for this purpose.

Meetings One of the main functions of ISBM will be to hold international meetings of which basic, clinical and public health research-and application in behavioral medicine can be discussed. Two types of meetings are envisaged: full international congresses, and regional meetings for special interest groups.

The frequency of meetings should remain flexible in the early stages of ISBM. However, it is envisaged that full international conferences will be held every two years.

FOUNDING SOCIETIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF BEHAVIORAL MEDICINE:

Academy of Behavioral Medicine Research (USA)

Czechoslovakia Medical Association:
Section on Neurohumoral Integration and Behavioral
Medicine and Modification

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Verhaltensmedizin and Verhaltensmodifikation (DGVM)
German Association of Behavioral Medicine and Modification

Nederlands Behavioral Medicine Federatie
Dutch Behavioral Medicine Federation

Society of Behavioral Medicine (USA)

Svensk Beteendemedicinsk Forening
Swedish Society of Behavioral Medicine