

EDITORIAL

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The thematic focus for this year's *Psychiatria Fennica* volume was initiated last autumn in collaboration with members of the Board of the Finnish Foundation for Psychiatric Research. It was discussed that the journal should expand its scope to encompass a broader perspective on mental health—beyond traditional medical and psychological frameworks and associated interventions. As editors, we found this suggestion both refreshing and timely.

Throughout the year, public discourse has pointed out the rising prevalence of mental health symptoms, particularly anxiety, behavioural regulation difficulties and challenges with concentration. In 2024, the most common reason for sickness allowance in Finland was mental health disorder (1), and over 50,000 individuals received sickness allowance due to an anxiety disorder. The School Health Promotion study 2025 reports that approximately one third of young girls experienced moderate or severe anxiety (2). Recent register-based cohort study followed the entire population of Finland from 2000 to 2020 and estimated the cumulative incidence of diagnosed mental disorders (3). The study reports that anxiety disorders had the highest cumulative incidence, and most individuals experience at least one type of mental disorder, often during youth. The researchers comment that this should be noticed in working life, schools, public services and everyday life, and they consider whether certain diagnosed conditions might be more appropriately conceptualized as mental health problems rather than disorders.

Some commentators argue that mental health is becoming overly medicalized, while others highlight the scarcity of treatment options and significant gaps in service provision. There is a growing demand for more accessible and cost-effective forms of support. Against this backdrop, the idea of gathering diverse approaches to mental health has proved to be both relevant and inspiring.

The process of curating these unconventional perspectives and the research underpinning them has been both challenging and rewarding. We extend our sincere thanks to all contributing authors who embraced the opportunity with open-mindedness and intellectual curiosity. This year, the role of the peer reviewers has been especially vital, providing insightful feedback that has helped uphold the high academic standards of *Psychiatria Fennica*.

We are proud to present a wide-ranging collection of research articles that explore mental health from multiple vantage points—including the influence of environment, social relationships, creative therapeutic modalities, physical activity and the role of work. Additionally, this volume features contributions on the development of mental health service systems, covering topics such as management, implementation and education.

The journal opens with an excellent overview by Kristian Wahlbeck, who examines mental health as a phenomenon situated within society, service systems and individual experience. This is followed by Timo Partonen's editorial, which delves into the significance of sleep and circadian rhythms—an area that affects us all and for which we bear personal responsibility along with specific treatment needs. These invited editorials elegantly crystallize the overarching theme of *Psychiatria Fennica* 2025.

Certainly, our content is not all-encompassing. For instance, bibliotherapy has a long-standing tradition, and reading may contribute positively to mental wellbeing. A study published in *Plos ONE* 2022 (4) shows that reading fiction can have a positive impact on measures of mood and emotion. Reading or listening to books written by other humans offers a special way to learn about other people's minds and emotions. This can deepen the connection with the social world, and at its finest decrease loneliness. However, for such positive effects to occur, there must be an infrastructure that systematically supports readers in evaluating their experiences through reflection and discussion. Nevertheless, both reading and deep reading literacy appear to be in decline. In her recent book, sociologist Riie Heikkilä analyses this phenomenon and argues that the observed decline is rooted in broader societal and structural factors (5). As inequality in society increases, disparities in reading practices also grow. This illustrates the diverse and multifaceted nature of perspectives and determinants associated with mental health.

I sincerely hope and believe that the readers of *Psychiatria Fennica* 2025 will enjoy the large variety of topics and gain new ideas to apply in practice or develop further. Our editorial team is already looking ahead to next year. The forthcoming volume will focus on psychoses and other serious mental disorders, which still often remain overshadowed in the expansive and flowing discourse surrounding mental health. We warmly encourage all researchers working in this vital field to submit manuscripts for publication in the next volume, scheduled for autumn 2026.

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