

- **Ingibjörg Sveinsdóttir, Psychologist, Primary Health Care of the Capital Area**
-Primary health care: Body and soul

Mental illness is a problem of the entire lifespan. Most mental disorders manifest themselves during adolescence and early adulthood. The economic and social burden of mental illness is staggering. The main burden is not in the cost of care, but rather in the loss of income, need for social supports and wide reaching effects of chronic disability. Evidence based methods are available for the treatment of many mental health issues. Research shows that primary care is an important cornerstone in the solution of this pressing public health problem. Economists state that it is cost effective to treat this problem. Governments cannot afford not to address this problem with a longitudinal approach. It is recommended that mental health problems be addressed through comprehensive strategies for promotion, prevention, treatment and recovery in a whole-of-government approach.