

**Dr Graciela Rovner**

**KEYNOTE**

**Title: *Integrating ACT into medicine and rehabilitation: a first line prevention and intervention for chronic conditions.***

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) is effective not only for mental health conditions, but also for many chronic physical conditions, such as chronic pain, cancer, obesity, eating disorders, cardiovascular diseases, weight loss, epilepsy, diabetes, tinnitus, MS, stroke, to name some of the chronic health conditions where behavioural changes seem to be the key of treatment success. According to the WHO, health care services should focus on preventing and treating chronic conditions (both physical and mental ones) by targeting the modifiable risk factors related to them, such as: how active/sedentary we are; what we eat, and to what extent we consume tobacco and alcohol.

ACT offers clear therapeutic processes that are transdiagnostic and can be applied by a range of professionals to prompt insight, motivation and sustainability when trying to make health promoting life-style changes. For example, in the area of chronic pain, research has consistently shown how ACT offers potent tools to both professionals and service users to effectively manage life despite a pain that was unresponsive to other forms of treatment (pharmacological, surgical, physiotherapeutic and other psychological treatments).

Behavioral medicine presents several challenges including how health professionals can best: 1) assess and understand the needs of service users, and 2) prompt behavioral changes to promote the health and wellbeing of service users. Another challenge is to understand the contextual behavioral perspective, a perspective focused on increasing the functionality of behaviors rather than decreasing symptoms or looking for pathologies or problems. Dr. Rovner will introduce ACTiveAssessment based on her research. This algorithm explains why some patients can make life-style changes quite quickly, while others need a lot of support and time.

Dr Rovner is the only ACBS Peer-reviewed ACT trainer in the world that is a physiotherapist. She held a PhD in Medicine from Sweden, three master degrees (clinical medical sciences, physiotherapy and psychology) and is the leader of the inter-professional pain team in Gothenburg, Sweden. Her language and examples are fully adapted to the medical field and apply to the inter-professional team. The uniqueness of this presentation is also added of the fact that Dr. Rovner has been working and trained medical professionals in several countries. She is intensive and highly inspirational.