

Barriers to Current Mental Health Assessment in India

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Abstract : Mental illness is still considered as an illness not to be treated, resulting India becoming the most depressed country in the world. At present, 150 million Indians are suffering from mental illness and desperately in need of immediate care assessment for their mental health condition. However, only 0.06 per cent of India's health budget is devoted to mental health treatment, in which the available data suggests that the state of spending the sanctioned budget in this regard is abysmal. Lack of awareness, ignorance, social stigma, and discriminations becomes the underlying factors for worsening the individual mental health conditions. Unfortunately, India becomes the most depressed country in the world, which is hugely affected by anxiety, schizophrenia, and bipolar disorder followed by China and USA as per the latest World Health Organization report. The National Care of Medical Health stated that at least 6.5 per cent of the Indian populations are under serious mental disorder both in the rural and the urban areas. Mental health is the integral part of health and can be affected by a range of psychosocial-economic factors that need comprehensive strategically approach for promotion, prevention, treatment, and recovery. In a low- and middle-income country like India, the advance progress in mental health service is visible consistently slow and minimal. Some of the major barriers can be seen in the existing public health priorities and its influence on funding; challenges to delivery of basic mental health care in the primary care settings; the minimal numbers of well-trained professionals in the area of mental health care; and lack of mental health perspective in public-health leadership. The existing barriers according to WHO (2007) are; lack of funding for mental health services is the core barrier in implementing quality mental health services, including inadequate coordinated and consensus based national mental health advocacy and plans, the absence of mental health in major donor priorities, marketing of expensive pharmaceuticals by industry, cost-effectiveness information on mental health services that is unknown to senior decision-makers and social stigma among others. Moreover, lack of strong mental health advocacy in countries to increase resources for mental health services and the role of social stigma and the view that mental health is a private responsibility are also the two barriers to mental health.

Keywords : mental health, depression, stigma, barriers

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