

## **Mental Health and Well-Being: Capacity Building of Community to Respond to Mental Health Needs of Transgender Populations**

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**Abstract :** In India and south Asia, stigma and discrimination against transgender community remain disproportionately high. Lack of mental health care restricts effective treatment and care for both physical and mental health. Knowledge assessment of 80 counsellors across India reflected that only 28% counsellors knew about the transgender community. Whereas, only 6% of them felt, that transgender community require a specific mental health support, considering the stigma they face in day to day life. Lastly, 62% did agree that they require specific training to address unmet needs of transgender community. A robust counselling module was developed with focus on technical counselling skills and strategies, specific counselling issues, identity and sexuality, disclosure, hormone therapy and sex reassignment surgery. Mental health related support should be an integral part of government and non-government programs for the overall well-being of transgender community who face stigma and discrimination at every level. Needs based capacity building and technical assistance is required towards providing mental health support for transgender populations and their partners.

**Keywords :** identity and sexuality, mental health, stigma, transgender

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