

SEMINAR: MENTAL HEALTH SUMMARY

Objectives:

1. Understand the definition and etiology of mental health
2. Discuss the global magnitude of mental illnesses based on GBD
3. List and classify the factors contributing to the occurrence of mental illnesses
4. Define stigma and explain its consequences on mentally ill patients, their families and treatment outcome
5. Understand the principles of preventing mental illness
6. Describe the public health importance of mental health in the kingdom (morbidity, mortality, cost effectiveness; i.e. the burden)
7. Name national mental health care services, programs, and efforts.

Mental health

Definition

The meaning of health has evolved over time. Early definitions of health focused on the absence of disease alone without taking other factors into account. This definition has changed in modern times to be: a state of complete physical, **mental** and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease. We can see from the definition that the mental status of a person is an essential part in his/her health. Mental health can be defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community. Mentally healthy people have a positive self-image and can relate successfully to others most of the time. They are able to handle life's everyday challenges and changes. Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices.

Etiology and factors

Since mental health plays a vital role in people's everyday lives, it is equally important to identify causes of mental health disorders. Identifying the etiology of such disorders will help us understand the variety and types of contributing factors to such disorders. It can also provide us with specific management based on etiology and allow for primary preventions for those at risk. Etiology of mental disorders can be classified as primary and secondary. Primary disorders have no clear underlying physical etiology. This is sometimes known as functional or non-organic disorders. Examples of primary disorders are panic disorder and psychological shock. On the other hand, secondary disorders have an underlying primary physical (organic) etiology. These disorders are induced by physical disease, medication, or substance abuse.

Etiological factors can be divided based on time and nature of the cause. Time factor can be long-term (childhood psychological distress), mid-term (abnormal personality traits, and short term (recent head trauma). Nature of the cause might be biological, psychological, behavioral, cognitive, and social factors. Poor nutrition, substance abuse, and conditions such as pediatric autoimmune neuropsychiatric disorder are also potential contributors to mental health illness.

Global Magnitude

Mental disorders are not the exclusive preserve of any special group; they are truly universal. They are found in people of all regions, all countries and all societies. The demographical prevalence by region shows that most countries lie between 10-15%, which represent around 1-in-7 people having one or more mental or substance use disorders. Countries such as Iran, Greenland, and Australia have the highest prevalence. Mental disorders have an impact on direct and indirect death tolls. The

direct death toll from mental health and substance use disorders is typically low. Direct death estimates usually result from eating disorders, which occur through malnutrition and related health complications. Direct deaths can also result from alcohol and substance use disorders. However, mental health disorders are also attributed to significant number of indirect deaths through suicide and self-harm. Suicide deaths are strongly linked — although not always attributed to — mental health disorders. Health impacts are often measured in terms of total numbers of deaths, but a focus on mortality means that the burden of mental health disorders can be underestimated. Measuring the health impact by mortality alone fails to capture the impact that mental health disorders have on an individual's wellbeing. Mental and substance use disorders account for around 5 percent of global disease burden in 2017, but this reaches up to 10 percent in several countries. Five types of mental illnesses appeared in the top 20 causes of global burden of disease (GBD) in 2013:

- 2nd Major depression
- 7th Anxiety disorders
- 11th Schizophrenia
- 16th Dysthymia
- 17th Bipolar disorder

Mental health stigma

Stigma can be defined as a mark of shame, disgrace or disapproval that involves negative attitudes or discrimination against someone based on a distinguishing characteristic such as a mental illness, health condition, or disability. Mental health stigma not only negatively impacts the individual but it can also affect his/her close associates. Families with a member who has a mental disorder could experience shame because others might blame them for being responsible for the disorder. Stigma on mentally ill patients can lead to limitations in socialization and disruption of family relations.

As far as the relation between stigma and treatment outcome is concerned. Scanty evidence is available to show a clear relation between mental health treatment outcome and its stigma. Different types of stigma such as public or self-stigma might differently impact treatment outcome. Overall, there is a need for further study to establish a clearer impact of stigma on treatment of mental disorders.

Prevention of mental illness

Preventing the onset of mental health problems before they occur, and supporting people to stay well, is an important approach to improving mental health in our communities. Three levels of prevention have been described:

Primary prevention: operates on a community basis. This consists of "improving the social environment", and promotion of the social, emotional and physical well-being of

all people. It includes working for better living conditions and improved health and welfare resources in the community.

Secondary prevention: This consists of early diagnosis of mental illness and of social and emotional disturbances through screening programs in schools, universities, industry, recreation centers, etc., and provision of treatment facilities and effective community resources. In this regard, "family based" health services have much role to play. The family service agencies identify emotional problems and early symptoms of mental illness, help family members to cope with overwhelming stress, treat problems of individual and social maladjustment when required and prepare individual family members for psychiatric care.

Tertiary prevention: seeks to reduce the duration of mental illness and thus reduce the stresses they create for the family and the community. In short, the goal at this level is to prevent further breakdown and disruption.

Importance of mental health in the kingdom

Mental health disorders are a major public health problem worldwide, affecting people of all ages, cultures and socio-economic status. They cause serious impairments in personal, social and occupational functioning, which lead to substantial societal costs related to productivity and use of health care services. Physical health has a strong relation with mental health. People with serious mental illnesses are at higher risk of experiencing a wide range of chronic physical conditions. In 2019, the Saudi National health and stress survey released a study about mental health in KSA, it showed that 34% of Saudis are diagnosed with a mental health condition sometime in their life. A survey done by the WHO has showed that the disability adjusted life years is 2916.55 per 100,000 population. The most common mental disorders in Saudi Arabia are separation anxiety disorder 11%, attention deficit hyper reactivity disorder by 8%, major depressive disorder 6%, social phobia 5.6% and obsessive compulsive disorder 4.1%. The consequences of mental disorders is 1.1% substance drug abuser, 3.4 suicide rate per 100,000 and 50,000 dementia cases. People with mental disorders have higher mortality rate by 2.2 times. Life expectancy in People with severe mental disorders on average tend to be shorter than the general population by 10 to 25 year in patients with severe mental disorders.

Cost effectiveness starts at a Population level. The school-based socio- emotional learning programs have shown to improve mental health and prevent suicide in adolescents. Also, they show a relative risk reduction in the incidence of depression and anxiety among indicated adolescent. While the cost-effective measures based on Individual level include basic psychosocial support for mild cases and anti-psychotic medication for moderate to severe cases have Improved functioning, level of disability, increase remission rate and reduce case fatality among patient with mental disorders.

National programs

A number of national programs are established in the kingdom to help prevent and treat mental illnesses. The department of mental health at King Faisal Specialist Hospital &

Research center provides psychiatric and mental health support to admitted patients and referral patients from other hospitals. It also provides treatment and evaluation for general psychiatry mood disorders. The department aims to make Psychiatric services accessible to the hospital clinical population and conduct clinical research with emphasis on mental health on patients in tertiary care setting.

The National center of mental health promotion provides a number of services that aim to raise awareness around mental health. One such service is Ajwad which is a center that provides rehabilitation services to psychiatric patients and displaced. Qareebon is a smartphone application that provides mental health e-services and treatments and free psychological consultations. Psychological Consultation center comprises of mental health specialists and counselors that provide confidential and professional consultations by telephone.

Another effort from Saudi Arabia in tackling the issue regarding mental health was the participation in the world mental health survey. In 2010, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) launched the Saudi National Health & Stress Survey. It is an important nationwide study that provides a vision for clinicians and health policy makers to establish data driven mental health services and programs in KSA.

The study aims to understand:

- (i) the prevalence of mental health problems and its burden in the Saudi community
- (ii) the individuals who are most at-risk in KSA
- (iii) the best ways of offering mental health services in KSA

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