

# Mental health report

## Definition of mental health

The definition of mental health is changing over time, but according to (WHO), mental health is **“a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community”**.

It is also a dynamic state of internal equilibrium which enables individuals to use their abilities in harmony with universal values of society. Basic cognitive and social skills; ability to recognize, express and modulate one's own emotions, as well as empathize with others.

It's important to identify the causes of mental health issues, since it has a major effect in people's lives. It also helps us to understand the variety and types of contributing factors to such disorders as well as their management and prevention.

There are many causes for mental illness, such as:

- During childhood, early adverse life experiences such as abuse or neglect can increase the risk of some mental illnesses.
- While in adults, traumatic life events or ongoing stress such as social isolation, domestic violence, relationship breakdown, financial or work problems can increase the risk of mental illness. Traumatic experiences such as living in a war zone can increase the risk
- Experiences related to other ongoing (chronic) medical conditions, such as cancer or diabetes
- Biological factors or chemical imbalances in the brain.
- Genetic factors: having a close family member with a mental illness can increase the risk.
- Alcohol or drugs
- Personality factors: some traits such as perfectionism or low self-esteem can increase the risk of depression or anxiety.

## The Global Magnitude of Mental Illnesses

Mental disorders are considered in the top 10 contributors to the global burden of disease. It can also occur in every socioeconomic, racial, and cultural group in the world.

These disorders are complex and can take many forms. The most prevalent conditions are depression, anxiety, and substance use disorders. And these common mental health diseases cost the global economy US\$ 1 trillion each year.

Depression is one of the leading causes of disability. Its Prevalence rates vary by age, peaking in older adulthood about 7.5% among females, and 5.5% among males. Depression also occurs in children and adolescents, but at a lower level than older age groups.

The World Health Organization (WHO) recently estimated that about 25% of the world population “one in four people” suffer from mental illness both in the developed and developing worlds. In major industrialized areas like the US, Canada, and Western Europe, mental illness also accounts for almost 25% of all disabilities.

In the 2015, WHO estimated that 788,000 people died due to suicide; many more than this number attempted. Suicide also accounted for close to 1.5% of all deaths worldwide, it considered in the top 20 leading causes of death in 2015. It's also the second leading cause of death among 15-29 year olds globally.

## Factors contributing to the occurrence of mental illnesses

It is crucial to identify factors and causes of mental disorders since it plays a major role in people's lives. These illnesses, like any other illnesses, can have a wide range of causes. Identifying and understanding these causes will help us in many aspects, such as treating, managing, and most importantly preventing. Among the known factors are the following:

**(1) Biological Factors:** some mental illnesses are linked to organic conditions such as brain defects or injury. Also, in genetics, people who have a family member with a mental illness may be in risk of developing such an illness. For example, the child of two schizophrenic parents is 40 times more likely to develop schizophrenia than the child of healthy parents. Some infections also can develop mental illnesses or even worsening of its symptoms.

**(2) Psychological Factors:** such as loss of a parent, poor ability to relate to others, neglect or severe psychological trauma.

**(3) Environmental Factors:** changing jobs or schools, substance abuse by the person or the person's parents, death or divorce.

## Stigma and consequence

Stigma can be defined as a deeply discrediting attribute associated with a given condition directed towards those of considered lower social standing. In which they'll have feelings of shame, hopelessness and isolation. lack of understanding by family, friends or others. fewer opportunities for employment or social interaction.

There are two types of stigma:

1-public stigma: refers to the general public's discriminatory response to people with mental illnesses

2-self stigma: refers to negative attitudes, internalized shame, that people with mental illness have about their own condition.

One of the major consequences is that it leads to lower rates in seeking medical treatment, because they think it would affect their reputation and social life, which in turn causes the illnesses to go undiagnosed and their symptoms to be exaggerated. So the mental health of those with mental illnesses will be further negatively impacted by stigma. Also it may cause lowered self-esteem and damaged family relationships.

A study conducted in 2017 involving more than 200 individuals with mental illness over a period of two years found that greater self-stigma was associated with poorer recovery from mental illness after one and two years.

## Prevention of mental illness

The major goal of prevention of mental disorders is to reduce the incidence, prevalence, and recurrence of mental disorders, also it aims to reduce the time spent with symptoms, or the risk that lead to the mental illness. also decreasing the impact of illness in the affected person, their families and the society

There are three levels of prevention:

(1) Primary: which operates on a community basis. by "improving the social environment", and promoting the social, emotional and physical well-being of all people.

(2) Secondary: consists of early diagnosis of mental illness and of social and emotional disturbances through screening programmes in schools, universities, industry, recreation centres. and provision of treatment facilities and effective community resources.

(3) Tertiary: which 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 break-down and disruption.

Mental health foundation has also described some ways that people have found to stay mentally well, like talking about one's own feeling, getting enough sleep, eating well, exercising, and caring for others also can lead to good mental health

## **Importance of mental health in the kingdom**

Mental health conditions are more common in Saudi youth, it is estimated that 2 in 5 Saudi Aged from 15-24 are diagnosed with a mental illness sometime in their life.

The most common 5 mental health condition in KSA were found to be as following:

- Anxiety disorder 11.9 %
- ADHD 8.0%
- Major depressive disorder 6.0%
- Social Phobia 5.6%
- OCD 4.1%

Mental health illnesses can have an effect on all areas of life, such as school or work performance, relationships with family and friends and ability to participate in the community.

The lifespan of people with severe mental disorders is shorter compared to the general population. on average they tend to die earlier than the general population. Which is referred to as premature mortality.

Not only is the mortality rate high, also the rates of Type II diabetes, respiratory diseases, and infections such as HIV, hepatitis and tuberculosis can be higher in patients with psychiatric disorders.

Several Studies have proven that Screening and psychological interventions (e.g, cognitive behavioural therapy [CBT]) at school were the most cost-effective interventions to improve mental health and prevent suicide in children and adolescents. While parenting interventions and workplace interventions had good evidence in mental health promotion.

## **Mental health during Covid-19 pandemic**

Previous studies stated that stress and post-traumatic syndrome after pandemics are more prevalent among women, elderly and young, and it is reported that in Saudi Arabia the news, social media and TV exposure exacerbated the psychological effect of COVID-19.

An estimated 40% of the general Saudi population reported different ranges of distress as a result of COVID-19. The Saudi authorities noted the rise of psychological disorder and distributed several health messages and guidelines to the public.

The prevalence of depression and anxiety among healthcare providers in Saudi Arabia were (55.2% and 51.4%, respectively). The anxiety score of which was significantly higher in female respondents and nurses. And healthcare providers aged from 30 to 39 years had significantly higher mean scores of depression and anxiety during the COVID-19 outbreak

## **National Programs**

Mental health care in The kingdom of Saudi Arabia came a long way in a very short time. A Lot of efforts have been made to help improve mental health and more importantly prevent mental illness in the community. Despite all the challenges the kingdom established around 21 mental health hospitals with a clinical capacity of 4,046 beds in addition to 99 psychiatric clinics.

Some examples include KKUH department of Psychological therapy which was the first department of Psychological therapy in the kingdom, The Department of mental health at King Faisal specialist hospital. Other mental health services include the teleconsultation that the ministry of health offered such as mobile apps like qareeboon, as well as a call centre, which significantly facilitated the seeking of psychiatric consultations.

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