**Forum: Health Committee**

**Agenda:** On measures to promote the use of mental health facilities

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**Introduction**

“Neuropsychiatric conditions are the leading causes of disability worldwide, accounting for 37% of all healthy life years lost from disease; they are the most disabling conditions even in low- and middle-income countries, which may be least able to bear such burdens. Although efficacious and tolerable treatments are increasingly available, even economically-advantaged societies experience competing priorities and budgetary constraints. Knowing how to provide effective mental health care has become imperative worldwide. Unfortunately, most countries suffer from a lack of data to guide decisions, absent or competing visions for resources, and near-constant pressures to cut insurance and entitlements." Said the National Center for Biotechnology Information

For a few decades, mental health illness has been largely overlooked by physical well-being. In fact, people with mental illness are found in all countries, in different ages of a group; young to elderly, at all stages of life with rich and poor, and in both urban and rural settings. If people with mental illness do not receive the right treatment and care needed, there would be a high risk of social isolation which would lead to another mental illness such as depression, or poverty. Mental illnesses such as depression, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Schizophrenia, Bipolar disorder, and other psychological disorders affect millions of people worldwide. With a population of 7.8 billion, a recent study had estimated that approximately 792 million individuals are suffering from a mental disorder. This is 9.8% of the people globally in the world’s population. Currently, there is between 76% to 85% of people with mental illness do not receive any treatment and medical care. The World Health Organization concern that further problems in future will be the poor quality of care for people with mental illness receive. In order to mitigate the impact of the increasing amount of people with mental illness. It is significant to encourage promote the use of mental health facilities.

This leads to a reason to promote the use of mental health facilities. Mental health facilities need to be promoted for people to get treatment before a disorder turns into multiple forms. However, this problem is met with an obstacle of stigma. Stigma is disapproval or discrimination against a person’s perceivable social characteristics, one of them being intelligence. People do not want to be categorized as mentally disordered beings because they fear judgement and prejudice that are formed when their use of mental health facilities is revealed. People’s fear of ostracization and judgement should be considerations that delegates should take when proposing solutions to the current issue. This is because no matter how much mental health facilities are formed, things cannot get better. After all people will still not be willing to use them.

The role of the mental health facility is to provide its client with the treatment appropriate with the diagnosed condition that the facility had determined beforehand. Such specialized centers are designed to make sure mental illnesses are gotten rid of. If these facilities are promoted effectively, problems like anxiety disorders will not be a big of a problem. If the rates of anxiety disorder reduce, the disorders that follow anxiety disorder will also decrease. Tackling the most prevalent, yet unsolved illnesses like anxiety disorder can act as a tool to deal with other devastating disorders.

There is no such thing as a cure for mental illness, however, there is a treatment that can help patients with mental disorders. Giving effective treatment to mental illnesses people takes time and effort.  

**Key Terms**

*Stigma*

Stigma is defined as a mark of disgrace as a result of stereotypes and misunderstandings. Stigma is the serious issue that could worsen people’s mental health problems; delay or impede getting help, care and treatment. In our society mental illness is stigmatized more than any other illness or condition. This leads our society to label and seeks separation from individuals with mental illness causing them to feel stunned, isolated, feeling their self-stigma and shame about their condition.

*Any Mental illness (AMI)*

It refers to the condition of mental illnesses where the condition of mental, behavioural, or emotional illness that has a mild impact, ranging from no impairment to mild, moderate.

*Serious Mental Illness (SMI)*

It refers to the condition of mental illnesses where the condition of mental, behavioural, or emotional illness that has resulted in a serious functional impairment which substantially interferes with or limits 1 or more major life activities. Serious Mental Illness (SMI) includes schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, major depression.

*Treatment Gap (TG)*

It refers to the difference between the number of people who need mental health treatment and those who received the treatment. It may also be expressed as the percentage of people who require treatment but do not receive any treatment. “Treatment gap (TG)” is used in the context of low- and middle-income countries (LMIC).

*Anxiety*

Anxiety is a feeling of disquiet characterized by persistent, excessive worry. Constantly feeling anxiety can be characterized as a disorder. Anxiety disorder can take several forms. Common to all of these is anxiety so distressing it can interfere with a person's ability to carry out, or take pleasure in, day-to-day life.

*Depression*

Depression is the most common illness shown worldwide. Depression is a leading cause of suicide and in most cases, for most disorders' depression is shown as a symptom. People with depression will have sadness, loss of interest, a low mood that will last for a long time, and it affects everyday life and activities.

*Disability-adjusted life year (DALY)*

Disability-adjusted life year (DALY) represent the total number of years lost to illness, disability, or premature death within a given population. Disability-adjusted life year (DALY) for a disease or health condition is the sum of the years of life lost(YLL) to due to premature mortality and the years lived with a disability (YLD) due to prevalent cases of the disease or health condition in a population.

*Burden of disease*

The burden of disease is the term that describes the impact of health problems. It considers social, economic, political, health and environmental factors to determine the cost of specific disease and disability exert upon the individual and society. The burden of disease is referred to as the sun of morbidity and mortality and it can be measured by a metric called “Disability Adjusted Life Years” (DALY).

*Mental neurological and substance use disorders (MNS)*

Mental neurological and substance use disorders are the major contributor to the increasing global disease burden estimated by disability-adjusted life years (DALY). People with mental neurological and substance use disorders and their families are challenged by the stigma that worsens their quality of life. The impact of MNS disorder on the social and economic wellbeing of individuals and the societies is huge, growing and underestimated.

*Years of lost life (YLL)*

Years of lost life is a fatal component of Disability-adjusted life year(DALY). Year of lost life represents one year of life lost due to premature death, defined as dying before the ideal life span. It is, therefore, a measure of premature mortality.

*Years lived with disability (YLD)*

Years lived with disability (YLD) are a measurement of the non-fatal burden of disease. Year of a life lived with any short terms or long term health loss. It depends on the severity of the disability that specific diseases cause and affects the individual.

**General Overview**

*Low- and middle-income countries*

“More than 85% of the world’s population live in the 153 low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). More than 80% of people who have mental disorders are residing in LMICs, with mental illness and substance abuse disorders presenting as an important cause of disease burden, accounting for 8.8% and 16.6% of the total burden of disease in low-income and lower-middle-income countries, respectively” - The National Institutes of Health.

Between 76% and 85% of people in low- and middle-income countries receive no treatment for their disorder. Nearly 90% of the world’s adolescents live in low-or middle-income countries and more than 90% of adolescent suicides are among adolescents living in those countries. The treatment gap(TG) often appear in LMIC. The main reason low-and middle-income countries failing with their mental services is the lack of reliable data on the mental health system, it impedes workforce planning efforts in LMIC. Low- and middle-income countries include Morocco, India, Cambodia, Philippines, Vietnam, and Uganda.

*High-income countries*

There is a misconception that improving the global mental health program is only about improving the services in LMIC however global mental health should be improving mental health services in everywhere, including High-income countries (HICs). There is an increasing concern with high-income countries about the efficacy, efficiency and acceptability of mental health services. Task-sharing and a development model of mental healthcare is a significant part to develop and address some of the current challenges facing mental health services in high-income countries. High-Income countries include South Korea, Singapore, Saudi Arabia, Canada, Chile, and Spain.

*Stigma and discrimination*

Stigma is the major cause of discrimination and exclusion. Also, it is a major issue that would worsen people’s mental health: it diminishes people’s self-esteem and robs people’s social opportunities. This includes being denied opportunities such as accommodation or employment because of their illness. Judgement is a natural part of our human condition however escalate to discrimination prejudice even hostility it becomes a start of stigma. The emotional causes of the stigma led to discrimination. Being discriminated against has a huge impact on self-esteem and confidence. This can increase isolation from society. 3 out of 4 people who suffer from mental illness report feeling stigmatized. Discrimination is now defined as stigmatizing behaviours. Way to combat stigma most effectively is to bring people into contact with a mentally disabled person.

*Teens affected by mental disorders*

Adolescence is a period of time characterized by significant physical, psychological, and social transitions. Half of the teens all mental health illnesses start at an age of 14 but in most cases, it’s undetected and untreated. 62000 adolescents died in 2016 as a result of self-harm. Depression is one of the leading causes of illness and disability among adolescents. Some adolescents are at greater risk of mental health conditions due to their living conditions, stigma, discrimination or exclusion, or lack of access to quality support and services. The consequences of not addressing adolescences and school-aged student’s mental health condition will extend to adulthood, impairing both physical and mental health and limiting opportunities to their social lives as an adult.

*Elderly affected by mental disorders*

The world’s population is ageing rapidly, The proportion of the world's older adults is estimated to almost double from 2015 to 2050 about 12% to 22%. Mental and neurological disorders among older adults account for 6.6% of the total disability (DALYs) for this age group. About 15% of adults aged 60 and over suffer from a mental disorder. Older people are particularly vulnerable to loneliness and social isolation and the effects on health that accompany them.

*Anxiety and Depressive disorder*

Anxiety disorders can be in many forms. Anxiety disorder can be also called as depression. Depression is most prevalent among individuals aged 18-25. In most cases, and for most disorders' it shows depression as one of the main symptoms. Depression is a disorder that is so common that it is easy to neglect. However, if people neglect treatment, this can lead to other branches of disorders along with detrimental decisions like drug-use or suicides. Depressive disorder, or simply Depression can also lead to three other disorders like substance use disorder, alcohol use disorder and drug use disorder. People suffering from mental or substance use disorder occupies 13% of the world’s population. This is about 970 million people every year suffering from a wide range of illnesses, such as bipolar disorders to eating disorders.

*Consequences of untreated illnesses*

Currently, there is between 76 percent to 85 percent of the people with a mental disorder do not receive any treatment and medical care. The first and the most common reason people with a mental disorder don’t seek help for mental health is because there is a lot of stigma and discrimination associated with the disorder. The economic cost of untreated mental illness is more than 100 billion dollars each year in the United States. The consequences of untreated illnesses include worsening issue, unemployment, substance abuse, homelessness, suicide, and it is the cause of about 90% of suicides. Due to the consequences of a long-term untreated mental disorder are potentially severe. There is no such thing as a cure for mental illness, however, there is a treatment that can help patients with mental disorders.

*United Nations Health Committee’s Past Actions against Mental illnesses*

Commission of Human Rights requested the Secretary-General to make sure the General Assembly keeps track on efforts to ensure human rights of impaired individuals are fully recognized. Economic and Social Council advocated the resolution proposed by the Commission of Human Rights. While human with disabilities goes into a broader category than mentally disabled individuals, the attempt shows the UN’s willingness to promote equity on all humans despite their abilities to perform tasks or their capabilities to maintain a normal life.

**Timeline of Events**

1990 – The first Global Burden of Disease (GBD) project (WHO) quantified the health effects of more than 100 disease and injuries for eight regions of the world in 1990, giving estimates of morbidity and mortality by age, sex, and region.

1992 – The first World Mental Health Day was celebrated at October 10th as an annual activity of the World Federation for Mental Health (WFMH) with more than 150 countries celebrating annual awareness program to bring people’s attention to mental health issues and it’s a major effect on peoples’ live worldwide.

2008 – World Health Organization (WHO) recognizes 75% of the people in low-income countries (LIC) do not have access to the treatment and medical care. Purpose of Mental Health Gap Action Programme (mhGAP) was to scale up the services and facilities for use of mental illness for low- and middle-income countries (LMIC).

2013 – World Health Organization (WHO)’s action plan to change in the attitudes that continue stigma and discrimination. It is called for an expansion of services/facilities in order to promote the high quality in the use of resources. Mental health action plan 2013 – 2020 was taken in the 66th World Health Assembly (WHA).

2015 – 17 Sustainable development goals (SDGs) had been established by the United Nations to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all nations. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the 2030 agenda. SDG 3: Good health and well-being. The major aim includes to reduce non-communicable diseases (one of the main groups of mental health condition) and promote human well-being and mental health.

**UN Involvement, Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events**

*National Alliance on Mental illness (NAMI)*

National Alliance on Mental illness (NAMI) is a United State based foundation organization that provides advocacy, education, support. National Alliance on Mental illness (NAMI) lead through public awareness events and activities to encourage understanding of the mental illnesses so that all individuals and families affected by mental illness can build better lives.

*Mental Health Foundation*

The Mental Health Foundation is a UK charity, whose mission is "to help people to thrive through understanding, protecting, and sustaining their mental health.” Mental health foundation’s mission is to help people understand, protect and sustain their mental health.

*Global burden of Disease (GBD)*

Global burden of Disease (GBD) is a research program of disease burden involving comprehensive assessments on the impacts of major diseases and injuries on mortality and disability rates all over the world. The program consists of over three thousand researchers from 145 countries.

*National Institute of Mental health (NIMH)*

The National Institute of Mental Health is the leading federal agency for research on mental disorders and it is one of the largest scientific organization in the world. According to National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), their mission is to transform the understanding and treatment of mental illnesses through basic and clinical research, paving the way for prevention, recovery, and cure. National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) developed a Strategic Plan to guide its research efforts and to ensure scientific breakthroughs become breakthrough for all people with mental disorders.

*World Health Organization (WHO)*

The World Health Organization (WHO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations responsible for international public health. World Health Organization (WHO) improve the mental health of individuals and society at large. This includes the promotion of mentalwell-being, the prevention of mental disorders, and efforts to increase access to quality mental health care that respects people's human rights.

*World Federation for Mental Health (WFMH)*

World Federation for Mental Health (WFMH) is an international, multi-professional non-governmental organization founded in 1948 to advance, among all peoples and nations, the prevention of mental and emotional disorders, the proper treatment and care of those with such disorders, and the promotion of mental health.

**Possible Solutions**

*Public Education*

Public education that teaches the societal understanding. To conduct a long-term campaign to enhance public knowledge and awareness of mental health issues. The public should also be conveyed the important message that recovery of SMI requires social inclusion, and discrimination against SMI patients is one of the major obstacles to their recovery.

*Online education*

The pandemic revealed a significant flaw in the alternative medium for educational delivery. In spite of the fact that online education has been strengthened over months of trial by numerous countries, online education can also be used to promote mental health. With grave quarantine measures restricting any physical communication whatsoever, people from all ages are vulnerable to mental illnesses like depression. Thus, at least the kids and teens can get access to a program for preventing mental illnesses through online education. There should be further consideration on the implementation of online education that can help adults as well by delegates.

*Advertisement*

Advertisements are one of the mediums easily accessible by many, one of the mediums that have heavy influence over people. Thus, advertisement companies can be subsidized and supported by the government to implement content that introduces everyone on programs to prevent mental illnesses. The serious consequences of untreated mental illnesses should also be emphasized.

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