

National Mental Health Programme (NMHP)

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Source: Website of National Health Portal

Background

The Government of India launched the National Mental Health Programme (NMHP) in 1982, keeping in view the heavy burden of mental illness in the community, and the absolute inadequacy of mental health care infrastructure in the country to deal with it. The District Mental Health Program was added to the Program in 1996. The Program was re-strategized in 2003 to include two schemes, viz. Modernization of State Mental Hospitals and Up-gradation of Psychiatric Wings of Medical Colleges/General Hospitals.

The Mental Health Care Act 2017

The law was described in its opening paragraph as “An Act to provide for mental healthcare and services for persons with mental illness and to protect, promote and fulfill the rights of such persons during delivery of mental healthcare and services and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto. “This Act superseded the previously existing Mental Health Act, 1987 that was passed on 22 May 1987.

3 main components of NMHP

- Treatment of Mentally ill
- Rehabilitation
- Prevention and promotion of positive mental health.

Objectives

- To ensure the availability and accessibility of minimum mental healthcare for all in the foreseeable future;

- To encourage the application of mental health knowledge in general healthcare and in social development;
- To promote community participation in the mental health service development; and
- To enhance human resources in mental health subspecialties.

Strategies

- Integration of mental health with primary health care through the NMHP
- Provision of tertiary care institutions for treatment of mental disorders
- Eradicating stigmatization of mentally ill patients and protecting their rights through regulatory institutions like the Central Mental Health Authority, and State Mental health Authority.

District Mental Health Program:

Envisages the provision of basic mental health care services at the community level. The activities covered under the DMHP include workplace stress management, life skills training, counseling in schools and colleges, community awareness, prevention, promotion and long term continuing care at different levels of district healthcare delivery system, etc.

Objective:

- To provide sustainable basic mental health services to the community and to integrate these services with other health services
- Early detection and treatment of patients within the community itself
- To reduce the stigma of mental illness through public awareness.
- To treat and rehabilitate mental patients within the community.

