

# National Mental Health Survey (NMHS)

February 4, 2021

## About the National Mental Health Survey

- NMHS was a unique collaborative endeavour undertaken across 12 states of India with active engagement of more than 400 persons during 2014-16.
- The project was **funded by** the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India.
- It was **coordinated by** the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences, Bengaluru.
- The National Mental Health Survey of India-2016 was conducted on a nationally representative sample of 34802 individuals, sampled from 12 states of India.

## Focus of NMHS

The NMHS was conceptualised to cover a representative national population, examine all priority mental disorders, focus on the treatment gap, service utilisation, disability and impact along with an assessment of resources and systems in a sample of Indian states; simultaneously and with uniform methodologies.

The population selected and interviewed was drawn based on scientific sampling methods by including individuals aged 18 years and above

## The objectives

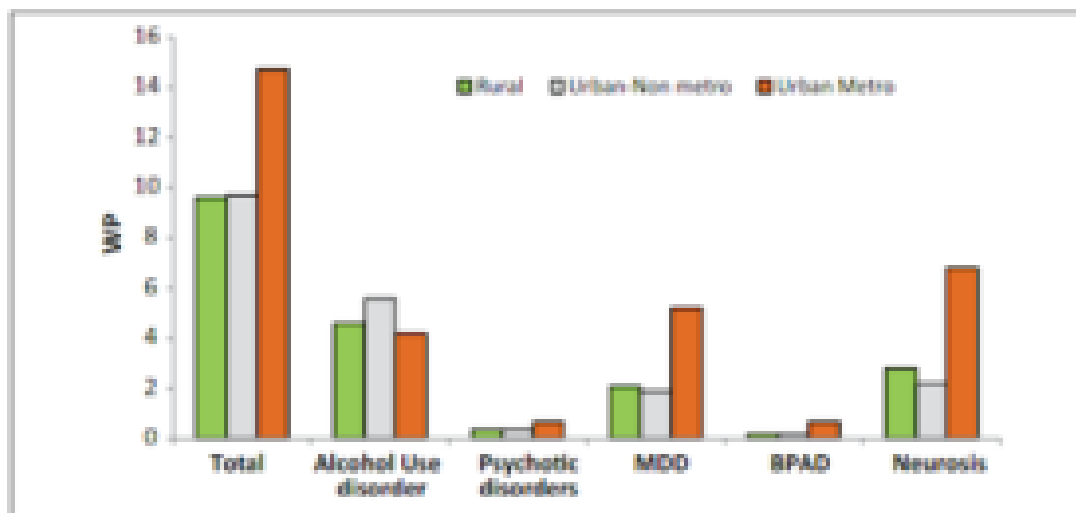
- Estimate the prevalence and pattern of various mental disorders in a representative Indian population
- Identify treatment gap, health care utilisation, disabilities and impact
- Assess the current mental health services and systems in

the surveyed states

## Key findings of the survey

- **Mental disorders contribute to a substantial disease burden in India:** it is estimated that, excluding tobacco use disorders, mental morbidity of individuals above the age of 18 years currently was 10.6%. The lifetime prevalence in the surveyed population was 13.7%.
- **Prevalence of mental morbidity is high in Indian urban metros:** The prevalence of schizophrenia and other psychoses (0.64%), mood disorders (5.6%) and neurotic or stress related disorders (6.93%) was nearly 2-3 times more in urban metros

Figure 8. Rural urban differentials in prevalence of mental disorders (%)



- **Common mental disorders affect significant sections of society:**
  - Common mental disorders (CMDs), including depression, anxiety disorders and substance use disorders are a huge burden affecting nearly 10.0% of the population.
  - This group of disorders are also closely linked to both causation and consequences of several non-communicable disorders (NCD), thereby contributing to a significantly increased health burden

## **1 in 20 people in India suffer from depression:**

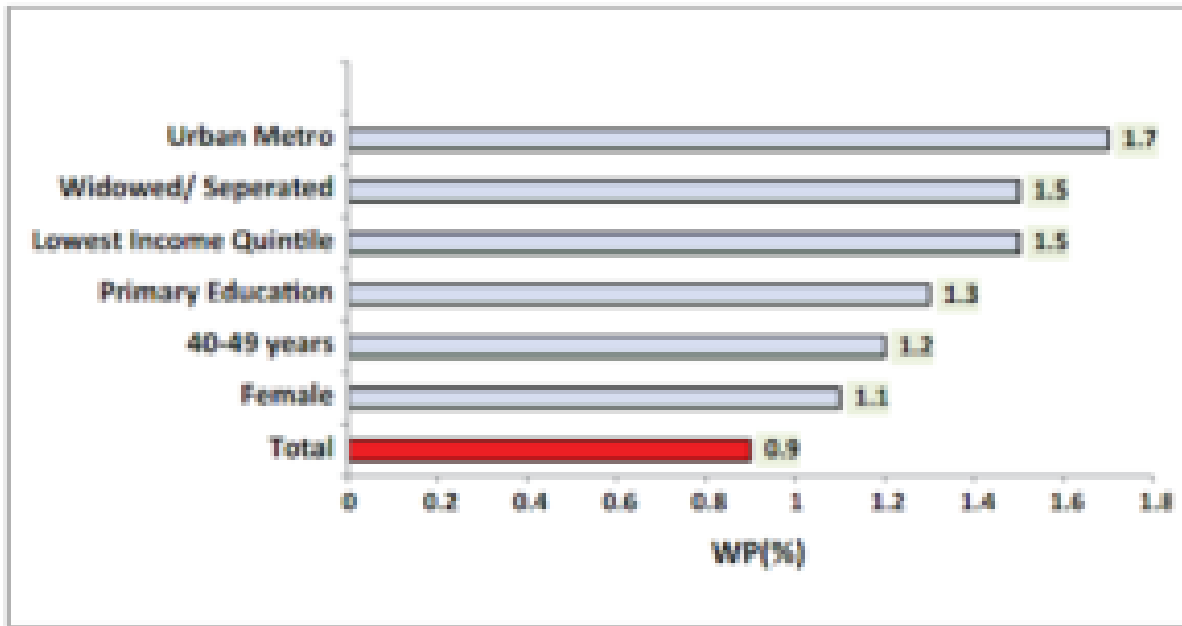
- The weighted prevalence of depression for both current and life time was 2.7% and 5.2%, respectively, indicating that nearly 1 in 40 and 1 in 20 suffer from past and current depression, respectively.
- Depression was reported to be higher in females, in the age-group of 40-49 years and among those residing in urban metros. Equally high rates were reported among the elderly (3.5%)

## **There is a high prevalence of psychoactive substance use:**

- Substance use disorders (SUDs), including alcohol use disorder, moderate to severe use of tobacco and use of other drugs (illicit and prescription drugs) was prevalent in 22.4 % of the population above 18 years in all the 12 surveyed states
- The survey also revealed that 0.6% of the 18+ population were recognised with illicit substance use disorders (dependence + abuse) which included cannabis products, opioid drugs, stimulant drugs, inhalant substances and prescription drugs.
- Among adult males this was 1.1%.

**High suicidal risk is an increasing concern in India:** Nearly 1% of the population reported high suicidal risk. The prevalence of high suicidal risk was more in the 40-49 age group (1.19%), among females (1.14%) and in those residing in urban metros (1.71%).

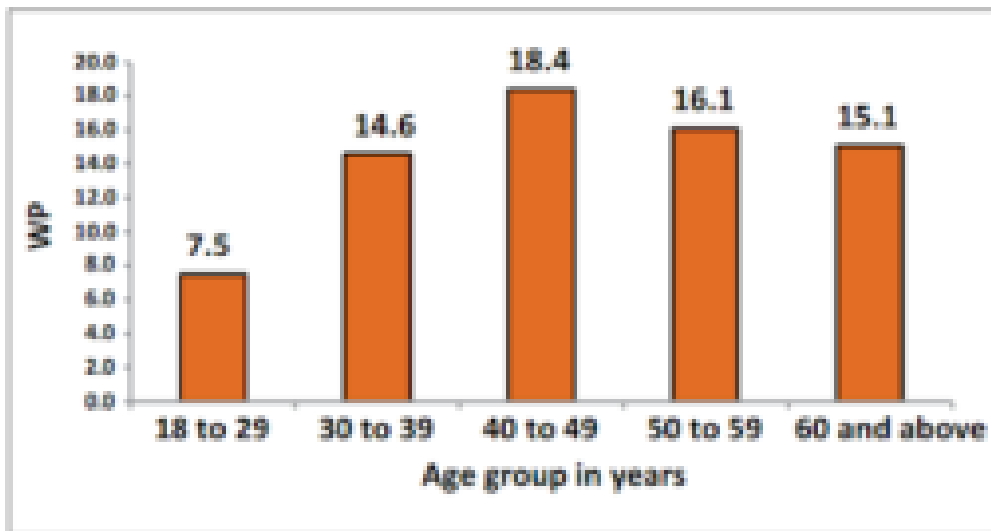
Figure 14. Prevalence of high suicidal risk : Socio-demographic differentials



**Severe mental disorders are equally important:**

- Nearly 1.9% of the population were affected with severe mental disorders in their lifetime and 0.8% were identified to be currently affected with a severe mental disorder.
- The current prevalence of severe mental disorders in most states was less than 1%, excepting in Manipur and West Bengal.
- **Productive age groups are affected most:** Males in the age group of 30 – 49 years were the most affected indicating that mental disorders contribute to greater morbidity in the productive population

Figure 15. Prevalence of mental morbidity in different age groups (%)



- **Both genders are affected – variation across disorders exists:**
- The overall prevalence of mental morbidity was higher among males (13.9%) than among females (7.5%).
- However, specific mental disorders like mood disorders (depression, neurotic disorders, phobic anxiety disorders, agoraphobia, generalised anxiety disorders and obsessive compulsive disorders were higher in females.

#### **Children and adolescents are vulnerable to mental disorders:**

- Prevalence of mental disorders in age group 13-17 years was 7.3% and nearly equal in both genders.
- Nearly 9.8 million of young Indians aged between 13-17 years are in need of active interventions. Prevalence of mental disorders was nearly twice (13.5%) as much in urban metros as compared to rural (6.9%) areas.
- The most common prevalent problems were Depressive Episode & Recurrent Depressive Disorder (2.6%), Agoraphobia (2.3%),

Intellectual Disability (1.7%), Autism Spectrum Disorder (1.6%), Phobic anxiety disorder (1.3%) and Psychotic disorder (1.3%)

- **Neurosis and stress related disorders affect women disproportionately:** Neurosis and stress related disorders affected 3.5% of the population and was reported to be higher among females (nearly twice as much as males).
- **Variations in prevalence exist at the regional and state levels:**
  - While the overall current prevalence estimate was 10.6% in the total surveyed population, significant variations in overall morbidity are seen across the different surveyed states, ranging from 5.8% in Assam to 14.1 % in Manipur.
  - Three states Assam, Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat reported prevalence rates less than 10%; in 8 of the 12 states, the prevalence varied between 10.7% and 14.1%

### **Epilepsy is an important public health problem:**

- Epilepsy is a major public health problem in India and several studies have documented its prevalence and characteristics.
- Under the NMHS, epilepsy was identified using the screener instrument recommended by WHO.
- The prevalence of epilepsy (Generalized Tonic Clonic Seizures) was 0.3%, with nearly 2 million persons requiring care

### **Persons with Intellectual disability need comprehensive management:**

- In NMHS, 2015-16, the assessment of Intellectual

disability was undertaken using a screener instrument.

- The prevalence of this condition was 0.6% in the surveyed population, resulting in nearly 4 million persons requiring care.

### **Mental Health and Sustainable Development goals**

Within the health related SDGs, two targets are directly related to mental health and substance abuse.

- **Target 3.4** “By 2030, reduce by one third premature mortality from Non communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being.”

**Target 3.5** requests that countries: “Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol.”