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NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMME

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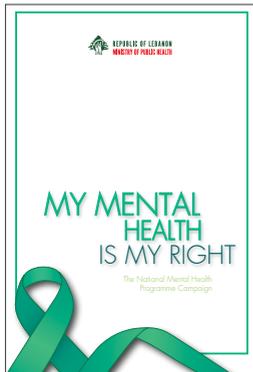
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National Mental Health Campaign 2015: “My Mental Health is my Right”



The National Mental Health Programme (NMHP) at the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) launched in November 2015 its first national mental health campaign, “My Mental Health is my Right”, in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, International Medical Corps (IMC), and multiple stakeholders in the mental health system in Lebanon. The campaign included a TV spot and distribution of informational brochures.

The TV spot featured the director general of different ministries including Public Health, Justice and Social Affairs; the presidents of the Lebanese Psychiatric Society, Order of Nurses, Order of Pharmacists, Syndicate of Psychotherapists and Lebanese Psychological Association; and the Head of the Institute for Development, Research, Advocacy and Applied Care (IDRAAC). These representatives all joined their voices in the spot to emphasize all together that mental health has a whole system in the country that is being geared to ensure equitable access to all to quality mental health services; and that all people have the right to consult and seek treatment.



The informational brochure that was distributed defined mental health and emphasized every person’s rights in relation to mental health. The brochure also included information that clarifies the roles of different professions related to mental health. The brochure was disseminated among Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Task Force organizations, PHC centres that have outpatient psychiatric departments, psychiatric hospitals, inpatient psychiatric wards, and mental health-related professional associations.

Both English and Arabic versions of the brochure are accessible on the MoPH website. The TV spot can be viewed on the MoPH Youtube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ATXaUjnto>

02

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Task Force: regional extension and 2016 planning

The Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) Task Force is a coordination body, established since February 2014, chaired by the NMHP at the MoPH and co-chaired by WHO and UNICEF.

As part of its action plan for 2015, regional extensions of the task force in the North and South of Lebanon were established and have been meeting on a monthly basis since August 2015. The task force had already been meeting monthly in the Bekaa.

The task force today includes around 60 organizations working on the Syrian Crisis response in Lebanon with the aim of harmonizing and mainstreaming MHPSS in all sectors and improving access to care.

An action plan for the task force for 2016 was developed based on discussions in all regions on the challenges faced in MHPSS work and potential actions the task force can undertake to address them. The objectives of the action plan include:

- the establishment of a referral system for crisis management,
- the sustainment of an online mapping of Who is doing What, Where and until When in MHPSS,
- the development of key indicators on MHPSS community service utilization,
- the development of a code of conduct for NGOs working in MHPSS,
- the harmonization of recruitment criteria and benefit packages of mental health professionals working in the humanitarian field,
- the scale-up of mental health trainings for ER staff in selected key hospitals,
- capacity-building for non-specialized staff and
- the rolling-out of Inter-personal Psychotherapy trainings and supervision.

03

“Substance Use Strategy for Lebanon 2016-2020” development

One of the strategic objectives of the “Mental Health and Substance Use Strategy for Lebanon 2015-2020” is to develop a substance use strategy for Lebanon.

The first draft of this strategy was developed in line with the “WHO regional framework for Strengthening Public Health Response to Substance Use” and based on the priorities identified in the National Consultation meeting conducted in April 2015 in which representatives and focal persons from relevant ministries, international and local non-governmental organizations and associations participated.

The goals and domains of action of this strategy are meant to constitute a framework that will guide national efforts engaged for substance use response (prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, harm reduction, supply reduction and social reintegration).

The draft is being reviewed by all ministries involved in the substance use response. Once consensus is reached among the ministries, the draft will be shared for review with relevant local and international experts and a national consensus meeting will be done on the final draft of the strategy before its launch.

04

Collaboration with the Lebanese University: Trainings of Trainers on mhGAP for the Faculty of Public Health professional cadre

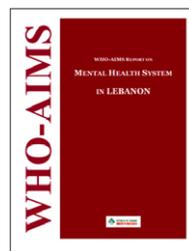
In September 2015, the NMHP completed a series of trainings for the professional cadre of the Faculty of Public Health in Section I (Fonar) of the Lebanese University.

An action plan will be set to offer Trainings of Trainers on the mhGAP for all the Lebanese University faculty members offering courses in mental health, in all Lebanese governorates.

05

The mental health system in Lebanon mapped: WHO-AIMS Report for Lebanon 2015

The Ministry of Public Health has published the “WHO-AIMS Report on Mental Health System in Lebanon”. The World Health Organization Assessment Instrument for Mental Health Systems (WHO-AIMS) was used to collect the necessary data to describe and measure the available resources and the utilization of mental health services in Lebanon. The assessment served as a baseline to monitor changes and inform policies and plans for a comprehensive mental health system.



The six interdependent domains assessed to form a relatively complete picture of the mental health system in the country included: the policy and legislative framework; mental health services; mental health in primary health care; human resources; public education and links with other sectors; and monitoring and research.

Based on the domain summaries and a critical assessment of the challenges and opportunities, key recommendations were formulated for the long-term improvement of Lebanon’s mental health system. These include:

- The need to reorient services to widespread community mental health care by increasing expenditure directed to primary care, enhancing staff capacities and setting a referral system.
- The activation of a mental health inspection body in order to improve human rights of mental health patients.

As such, the results of this report further exacerbate the need for all actors to cooperate and collaborate for the successful implementation of the “Mental Health and Substance Use Strategy for Lebanon 2015-2020”. This Strategy aims to address the weaknesses highlighted in this report, with the mission of “ensuring the development of a sustainable mental health system that guarantees the provision and universal accessibility of high quality mental health curative and preventive services through a cost-effective, evidence-based and multidisciplinary approach, with an emphasis on community involvement, continuum of care, human rights, and cultural relevance.”

The report and the national strategy are both accessible on the MoPH website.

The National Mental Health Programme participated in the following events:

- The mhGAP Forum hosted by WHO in Geneva on 8-9 October 2015 to promote collaboration and coordinated action to address progress in global mental health. The forum was attended by nearly 40 Member States and 150 participants from UN agencies, foundations, NGOs, academic and research institutions and WHO Collaborating Centres.



- The Mental Health Day Conference “Dignity and Mental Health” organized by the Lebanese Psychiatric Society on October 30-31, 2015 during which Dr. Rabih El Chammy, head of the NMHP, delivered an overview of the mental health system reform currently in action.

**All NMHP newsletters are accessible on the MoPH website:
<http://www.moph.gov.lb>**

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