

COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM

A REPORT ON MENTAL HEALTH TRAINING WORKSHOP AND COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM ACTIVITIES, JINJA UGANDA

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Background

We organized and conducted a 4 day in-service training in mental Health for the general Health Workers in the lower Health Units in Jinja District at Jinja Regional Referral Hospital/Paradise Hotel from Tuesday 9th - Sat 12th Feb, 2011. There were a total of 20 general health workers (15 of them clinical officers, 3 nursing officers and 2 mental health service users).

The overall aim was to orientate them on identification/recognition and management of various mental health problems, proper channels of referrals of difficult cases and promotion of mental health in the community. The training was facilitated by the mental health team of Jinja Regional Referral Hospital. The training workshop started with an opening ceremony officiated by the District Health Officer (DHO) Jinja District-Dr.Dyogu Peter and the Assistant Commissioner- Nursing (Head of training) Jinja hospital- Ms. Amuge Beatrice, and closing was by the Acting Hospital Director, Jinja Hospital-Dr Balina Nseko.

Before the official opening, Martha Akullo, the project coordinator, briefed the congregation about the project, she was particularly grateful to Action for Mental Health, Switzerland, through Prof. Normal Sartorius, for considering the plight of people living with mental illnesses in this region. She further stated that other activities along with this workshop were follow-up support supervision of the health professionals going to be trained then, setting up a drug bank with some drugs used in mental illnesses, establishment of some Income Generating Activities for the patients, establishment of mental health out- reach clinics and home visiting of the vulnerable patients with mental illnesses. She informed participants that the program runs for eight months and the challenge would be sustainability of the project activities beyond the current financial support.

Participants' expectations

At the beginning of the training, we assessed the participants' expectations and they were as follows:

- To get knowledge and skills in Mental Health and how to manage mental illnesses
- To know the roles of the lower Health units in relation to mental health.
- To learn more about the community's role in mental health/illness

- To meet old lost friends and make new ones
- To share experiences
- To get informed about the burden of diseases due to mental illnesses in Busoga region and the national level
- To get handouts
- To get certificate of training

Workshop processes

We had a very interactive and participatory learning which included facilitators' presentations, role plays or testimonies, group discussions and presentations. Every presentation would be followed by questions, answers, clarifications and discussions.

The first day started with registration followed by personal introductions, climate setting, i.e. election of course leaders (which included the chairperson, welfare officer, timekeeper and the spiritual leader), expectations, norms and the official opening of the workshop. Thereafter, the training started with introduction to mental health, definition of terms used in psychiatry, causes of mental illnesses, general symptomatology and classification of mental disorders facilitated by Noso Paul and Martha. Then Robinah and Ronald Gabula took over with Bipolar Affective Disorders which was followed by a role play and Anxiety disorders by Damalie.

Day 2 started with review of day one's work, followed by Alcohol/Drug-Related Mental disorders which was very interesting as one of the facilitators gave his own testimony as a problem drinker and how he quit drinking (the hard way, though). Afterwards Jude and Damalie discussed Post Traumatic Stress Disorders, Mental Health problems related to the Female gender and Psychiatric Emergencies. Organic Mental Disorders were also discussed this day and they generated lots of questions as many of the participants had never seen and treated some cases. Case scenarios of the discussed topics were presented and discussed by all participants in groups of fives.

The third day was the heaviest with childhood and adolescent mental disorders by Dr. Nalugya Joyce, Epilepsy by Gabula and Schizophrenia by Mufumba. On this day there was a touching testimony by a patient being treated for Temporal Lobe Epilepsy who could find himself lost, fight friends and do other complex activities without knowing them only to be told about them later. He narrated how he lost his friends while his teachers and relatives could not understand him. He eventually dropped out of school but later came to the hospital where he was diagnosed and put on antiepileptic medications. He improved tremendously and resumed his education. Group discussions and presentation of the topics covered was also done on this day. This was a way of assessing how serious the participants were and it was amazingly good.

The 4th and last day, Gabula took us through HIV-Related Disorders and there was a role play. This was another interesting topic and participants shared a lot of experiences in their communities. There were also discussions on general management of mental Disorders in a health

unit/community, mental health promotion and prevention of mental illness and the burden of disease due to mental illness. As a way of reassuring the participants that the mentally ill patients can still function normally when on treatment, we involved Mrs. Alambuya Robinah (a service user and social worker with Mental Health Uganda) in the discussion of the health rights of people with mental illness and she impressed every one. The day ended with a discussion of an action plan which recommended the following:

- To give a feedback report to their supervisors/area managers about the training, to discuss with them provision of space for mental health services, do a continuing medical education (CME) about knowledge in mental health, make a requisition for medicines used in mental illness (though often left out because of high costs) and indicate mental patients in their monthly reports.
- To start up mental health clinics at their units.
- To sensitize the communities around them on mental health, especially in Outpatients' departmental health talks, use of posters and news prints.
- Have review meetings to discuss their progress, challenges and way forward.
- To network and do consultancy with us and improve on their reading culture as they were given all the information they needed in the handouts provided.
- To identify and work with expert clients.

Workshop evaluation

In the evaluation that we did at the end of the training, over 90% of the participants said that the training was very helpful to them as they had little or no knowledge on mental health problems and yet they were receiving the mentally ill patients at their units. Many were happy with the topics discussed though some reported having been bored by some; some participants were not very comfortable with the venue and a few with meals. Many suggested follow-up support supervision, followed by availability of medicines used in mental disorders in their health units, community sensitization on mental health, more involvement of mental health service users in mental health programs and also to train other cadres of health workers of the lower health units in mental health and to form support groups.

After the evaluation of the workshop was done, we had a remark from the group leader who on behalf of the participants, thanked Action for Mental health(in absentia) for funding the workshop, the deputy Hospital Director for honoring our invitation to come, the Mental health Unit for coordinating the workshop and the participants for coming to attend the training. He asked the participants to do their best to see that they put into practice the knowledge and skills learnt and

the facilitators to also do their part as discussed. The workshop ended with giving handouts and certificates before a closing remark by Dr. Balina Nseko. In his remark, he was very impressed by the gesture and wished we didn't stop here as there is still a lot that has to be done on mental health. He officially closed the workshop.

Challenges

The workshop came at a time when Uganda was experiencing inflation. This made it difficult for us to strictly adhere to the budget made formerly.

Some items were not included in the budget yet very necessary, e.g. handouts, certificates and accommodation and meals for facilitators. So facilitators had to come from home every day and some items on the budget cancelled.

Ongoing and Remaining activities

- Follow up/support supervision of the trained personnel is on going now.
- Drug Bank Project-started with medicines that are usually not available in the hospital.
- Income Generating activities-also started with vegetable growing and poultry keeping at a small scale.
- Home Visiting-to start soon
- Out-reach clinics-not yet started (soon to start as support supervision has already started).

Annexes

List of facilitators:

- Dr. Nalugya Joyce-Consultant Psychiatrist-Tel. 0772629862
- Mr. Noso Paul-Principal Psychiatric Clinical Officer-Tel. 0772970755
- Ms. Mukyala Damalie-Senior Psychiatric Clinical Officer- Tel. 0772620723
- Mr. Mufumba Emmanuel- Psychiatric Clinical Officer-Tel. 0772675788
- Mr. Gabula Ronald- Psychiatric Clinical Officer- Tel. 0782694737
- Mr. Isabirye Jude- Psychiatric Clinical Officer-Tel. 0774333830
- Ms. Nampijja Robinah- Psychiatric Clinical Officer-Tel. 0772442223
- Ms. Akullo J. Martha-Psychiatric Clinical Officer-Tel. 0772331724

List of participants

1. Idondo Titus –Magamaga H/C 3-0772396233
2. Kyakumaiso Martha –Budima H/C3 – 0774000458
3. Kangawo Fred –Buwenge H/C4 – 0782616515
4. Mweru Denis – kakaire H/C3 – 0782663849
5. Menya Proscovia – Mpumudde H/C4 – 0774320290
6. Sanya Aggrey – Jinja Hosp. Children’s unit – 0752617388
7. Nambi Stephania – Busede H/C 3 – 0773849399
8. Isabirye Christopher – ButagayaH/C3 – 0772877826
9. Baligeza Stephen – Budondo H/C4 – 0757993992
10. Were Edward – Mpambwe H/C3 – 0782153219
11. Lubuya Jackson – Jinja Central H/C3 – 0776652111
12. Asimwe Annie – Bugembe H/C4 – 0772986457
13. Namuganza Jennifer B. – Walukuba H/C4 – 0772517468
14. Kazigo Ali – Lukolo H/C3 – 0782473398
15. Nabirye Annet E. – Wakitaka H/C3 – 0782898323
16. Naguyo Susan – Kakira H/C3 – 0776836912
17. Arim Jane W. – Jinja Hosp.(General out-patient department) – 0772383206
18. Malingumu Wilson – Budondo H/C4 – 0776981374
19. Alambuya Robinah – Mental Health Uganda – 0776122265
20. Nyangoma Annet – Mental Health Uganda – 0774371091.



Certificate of Participation



**MINISTRY OF HEALTH
JINJA REGIONAL REFERRAL HOSPITAL**

**DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
In conjunction with
ACTION FOR MENTAL HEALTH, SWITZERLAND**

Certificate Of Participation

This is to certify that

.....
*has successfully completed a 4 – day training in mental
health for General Health Workers held at Jinja Main
Hospital from 9th – 12th February 2011.*

.....
**DR. NALUGYA JOYCE
CONSULTANT PSYCHIATRIST.**

.....
**AKULLO JANET MARTHA
COORDINATOR.**



Dr Nalugya during a session



Session in Progress



A group of facilitators and participants



A participant receiving a certificate



Group photo with Dr Nalujja



Dr Nseko with some participants



Dr Nseko with some facilitators