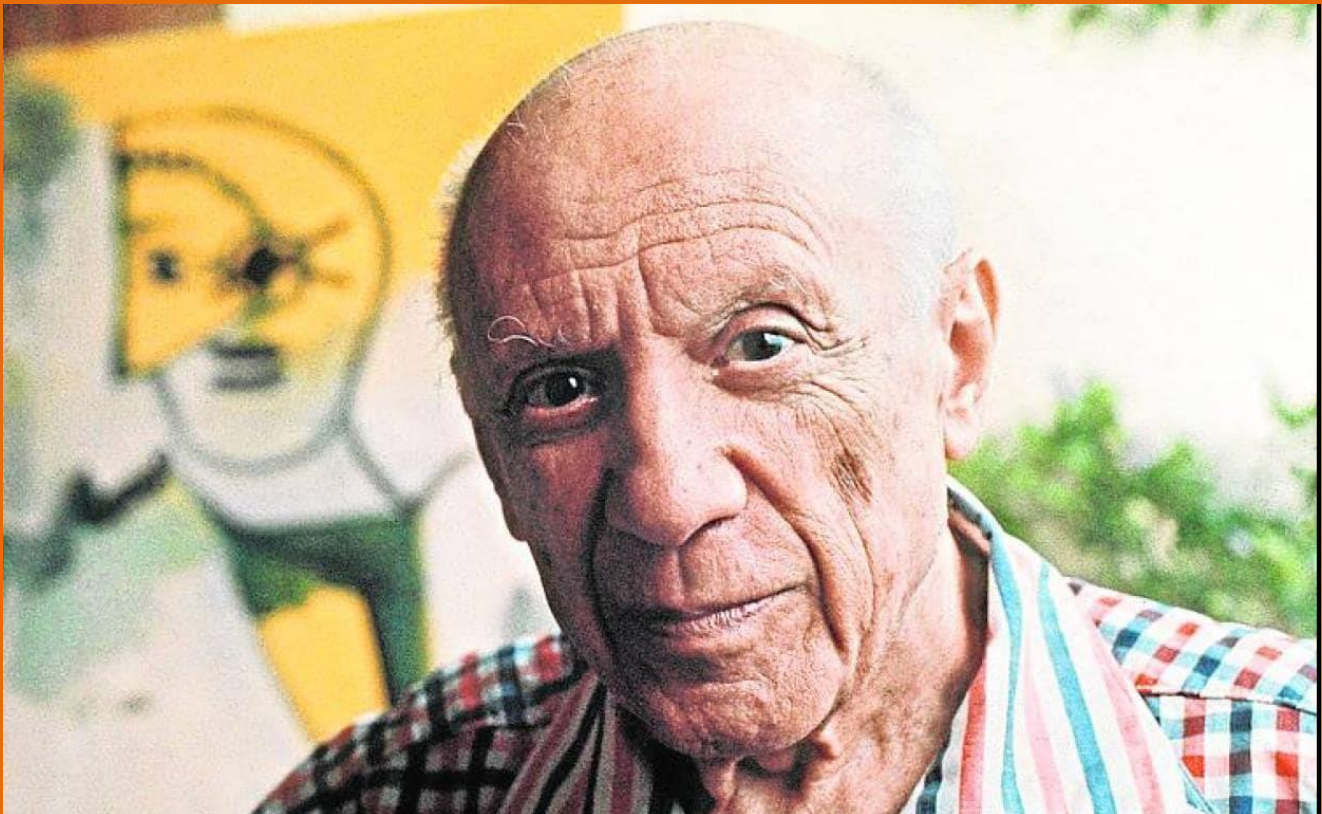




Guernica



Pablo Picasso painter and sculptor



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**Reflecting on the Year 2024 and the
Significant Strides Made for Mental Health –
A Letter From**

**Senator Dr. Karim Ahmed Khawaja
Chairman, Sindh Mental Health Authority**



Dear Readers,

It is with great pleasure that I present this edition of the Sindh Mental Health Authority magazine, dedicated to exploring the critical intersections of Workplace and Mental Health, Gender Disparity, Substance Use, and Diversity and Inclusion.

It was good news for me to learn that President of Pakistan Honorable Asif Ali Zardari sahab, directed me to meet with Honorable Minister Health Dr. Azra Fazal Pechuho regarding Health and Mental Health issues.

On the directives of President of Pakistan, I met with Minister Health for 45 minutes to discuss these issues and submitted report in written these things. I am humbly grateful to both of them.

These efforts would not have been possible without the unwavering support and leadership of the Sindh Government. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Chief Minister, the Health Minister, the Health Department, the Health Secretary, PPHI, and all District Health Officers (DHOs) for their

valuable contributions to making SMHA's vision a reality. Their commitment continues to drive meaningful change in mental health across Sindh.

Sindh continues to lead the way with transformative mental health initiatives. Under the aegis of the Sindh Mental Health Authority and in collaboration with the Health Department, LUMHS, Thar Foundation, and SCJIP&BS, we have successfully completed the pivotal research study, "Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices (KAP) Among the Residents of Tharparkar." This groundbreaking study will help shape future interventions for some of the most underserved communities in our province.

Sindh has made remarkable strides in mental health care, becoming the first province in Pakistan to integrate mental health into primary healthcare. The Sindh Mental Health Authority has successfully trained Sindh Health Department doctors, Peoples Primary Health Initiative's (PPHI) doctors and Lady Health Workers across 30 districts in mental health screening and management. These

efforts aim to address the severe shortage of psychiatrists and psychologists while making mental health services accessible at the community level, aligning with SMHA's mission to foster awareness, accessibility, and holistic well-being for all.



Our workplaces, too, must evolve to become sanctuaries of support and growth, where mental health is as valued as productivity. This edition brings together thought-provoking articles and expert insights contributed by the mental health professionals of Sindh, offering a deep dive into the themes that shape our mental health landscape. I hope this magazine inspires meaningful conversations and actionable steps toward a mentally healthier society.



Guernica: A Psychological Autopsy of War and a Timeless Plea for Peace

Picasso's "Guernica," a masterpiece of Cubist expressionism, is not merely a depiction of the horrors of war. It delves into the depths of human suffering, laying bare the psychological torment inflicted upon individuals and society. The painting's fragmented forms and distorted figures mirror the shattered psyche of those affected by war. The anguished faces, contorted limbs, and piercing cries symbolize the psychological trauma of individuals grappling with loss, fear, and despair. The bull, often interpreted as representing brutality and fascism, can also be seen as a manifestation of the dark forces within the human mind.

"Guernica" is a stark indictment of the violence inflicted upon innocent civilians. The women clutching their dead children, the fallen soldier, and the dismembered bodies speak to the brutal realities of war and the social injustices that fuel it. The painting serves as a poignant reminder of the devastating consequences of human conflict and the suffering it inflicts upon the vulnerable.

Beyond the physical violence, "Guernica" also exposes the psychological abuse that permeates war. The distorted figures, the

vacant stares, and the overall sense of chaos and despair reflect the psychological toll of witnessing and experiencing unimaginable horrors. The painting serves as a haunting reminder of war's lasting scars on the human psyche. The absence of color, replaced by a stark palette of blacks, whites, and grays, further emphasizes the bleakness and despair of the situation. This monochromatic palette not only reflects the physical destruction of the city but also the emotional devastation experienced by its inhabitants.

"Guernica" transcends the specific event it depicts. It is a timeless testament to the destructive nature of war and the suffering it inflicts on individuals and society. It serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of peace, social justice, and the protection of human rights. By confronting the psychological and social wounds of war, we can strive towards a more just and compassionate world.

Essentially, "Guernica" is not merely a painting; it is a psychological autopsy of war, a visual testament to the human cost of conflict, and a poignant plea for peace and social justice. It compels viewers to confront the horrors of war and to question the values that lead to such devastating consequences.

Senator Dr. Karim Ahmed Khawaja meet With Health Minister Sindh Dr. Azra Fazal Pechuho on 9th July, 2024

Senator Dr. Karim Ahmed Khawaja, Chairman SMHA met with Honorable President of Pakistan Mr. Asif Ali Zardari. Following his directives, he met with Minister of Health Madam Azra Fazal Pechuho in his office. During the meeting, discussed the health and mental health issues.



Chairman SMHA inaugurate the Key Recommendations on the Round Table Discussion "Mental Health and Responsibilities of Media"

The Chairman of the Sindh Mental Health Authority inaugurated the key recommendations from a round table



discussion on 'Mental Health and

Responsibilities of Media (print, electronic and digital media).' The inauguration took place in his office and was attended by Secretary SMHA Dr. Syed Zafar Mehdi, Prof. Neel Kanth (Professor of Pediatrics), Dr. Ajmal Mughal (Chief Psychiatrist), Dr. Tooba Farooqi (Assistant Professor, FUUAST), and Ms. Mahnoor Shah (Researcher/Psychologist). Following the inauguration ceremony, a meeting was also held to discuss the upcoming quarterly magazine.

**Ms. Banafsha, Senior Research Associate,
Global Health Visit SMHA office and Meet
With Chairman, Sindh Mental Health
Authority, Regarding PHC Global Project**

Ms. Banafsha, Senior Research Associate at Global Health, met with Chairman, Sindh



Mental Health Authority, Senator Dr. Karim Ahmed Khawaja, to discuss the PHC

Global project. The meeting, which also included Secretary SMHA Dr. Syed Zafar Mehdi, Dr. Maria Iqbal, representatives from Girah e Ishtiraq Foundation, and Mr. Jibran Sharif, resulted in Chairman SMHA offering the Global Health team the opportunity to visit Tharparkar and participate in upcoming SMHA programs. These programs include mental health training for doctors (from the Health Department and PPHI) and LHWs, telepsychiatry services, counseling initiatives, and an upcoming research project.

**Senator Dr. Karim Khawaja, Chairman
SMHA & Member, Board of Governors of
IBS Participated In 10th Bog Meeting of
Dr. A.Q. Khan Centre, Institute of
Behavioral Sciences (IBS)**

The 10th Board of Governors meeting of the Dr. A.Q. Khan Centre, Institute of



Behavioral Sciences (IBS), Dow University of Health Sciences was held at the IBS Board Room in Karachi. Attendees included Chairman of the Board and Vice Chancellor DUHS Prof. Muhammad Saeed

Qureshi, Member of the Board and Chairman SMHA Senator Dr. Karim Ahmed Khawaja, Member/Secretary of the



Board Brig (R) Shoaib Ahmed, Member Prof. M. Iqbal Afridi, Member Prof. Farah Iqbal, and other members.

Follow up meeting has been conducted between Sindh Mental Health Authority and Department of Genetics, University of Karachi on 1st August, 2024

A follow-up meeting was held between the Sindh Mental Health Authority (SMHA) and the Department of Genetics, University of Karachi, to discuss mental health and related issues.



Attendees included Senator Dr. Karim Ahmed Khawaja (Chairman, SMHA), Prof. Dr. Maqsood Ali Ansari (Head of Genetics Department), Dr. Syed Zafar Mehdi (Secretary, SMHA), Prof. Dr. Farah Iqbal,



Madam Musarrat Jabeen (Member, SMHA), Prof. Dr. Uzma Badar, Dr. Erum Shoaib, Dr. Fawad Qureshi, Dr. Rifat Ahmed, Dr. Ayesha Riaz, Dr. Aribah Naz, Mr. Amir Mugheri, and Mr. Faris Mughal.

During the meeting, Chairman SMHA presented a key recommendation report on the Role of Media on Mental Health to Prof. Dr. Maqsood Ansari.

Mr. Ahsan Azam, G.M, Poverty Eradication Initiative & Dr. M.Tofique, CEO, Sindh Govt. Children Hospital Visited SMHA Office



Mr. Ahsan Azam, General Manager, Poverty

Eradication Initiative (PEI) and Dr. Muhammad Tofique, CEO, Sindh Government Children Hospital Karachi visited SMHA office and met with Senator Dr. Karim Ahmed Khawaja, Chairman, Sindh Mental Health Authority and discussed different issues of mental health, in the meeting Dr. Syed Zafar Mehdi, Secretary SMHA and Mr. Shahid Jatoy, Information Commissioner, Sindh Information Commission (SIC) were also present.

MOU Signing Ceremony Has Been Conducted Between SMHA And Poverty Eradication Initiative on 7th August, 2024

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signing ceremony was held under the chairmanship of Senator Dr. Karim Ahmed Khawaja, Chairman of the Sindh Mental Health Authority (SMHA). The ceremony, aimed at improving the well-being of the people of Sindh, was conducted between SMHA and the Poverty Eradication Initiative (PEI). In attendance were Secretary SMHA Dr. Syed Zafar Mehdi, Mr. Ahsan Azam, General Manager of PEI, Dr. Muhammad Tofique, CEO of the Sindh Government



Children's Hospital, Karachi, and Madam Musarrat Jabeen, a Member of SMHA.

Chairman SMHA Call a Zoom Meeting Regarding Upcoming Research, Tele-Psychiatry and Training Sessions in District Tharparkar

Senator Dr. Karim Ahmed Khawaja, Chairman of the Sindh Mental Health



Authority convened an online (Zoom) meeting to discuss upcoming Research, Tele-Psychiatry, and Training sessions in District

Tharparkar. Participants included Dr. Lekhraj Sarangani (District Health Officer,



Tharparkar), Dr. Syed Zafar Mehdi (Secretary, SMHA), Madam Musarrat Jabeen (Member, SMHA), Mr. Fayyaz Shaikh (Health Sector, Thar Foundation), Dr. Abdul Razzaque Nohri (Senior Pharmacist, Tharparkar), and Dr. Manisha Kumari.

P r e s i d e n t P a k i s t a n Y o u t h P a r l i a m e n t , M u h a m m a d A b u b a k a r a n d C o n v e n e r C E C , A d n a n Z a m a n , c a l l e d o n C h a i r m a n S M H A

President Pakistan Youth Parliament, Muhammad Abubakar, and Convener CEC, Adnan Zaman, called on Senator Dr. Karim Ahmed Khawaja, Chairman Sindh Mental Health Authority, at the SMHA office.

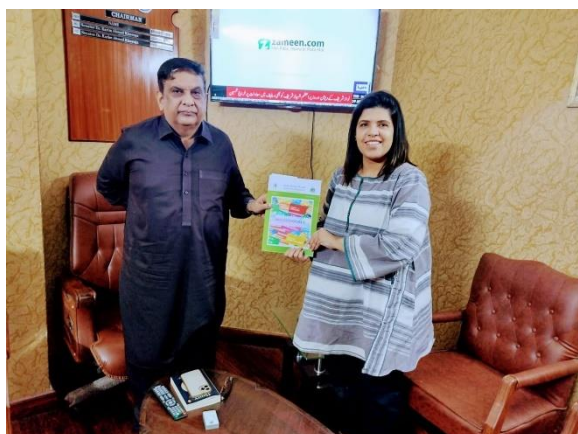


During the meeting, Senator Karim Khawaja presented the Pakistan Youth Parliament delegation with a magazine and reports on mental health initiatives in Sindh, while President Abubakar presented a souvenir to Chairman Khawaja.

The meeting focused on addressing mental health challenges faced by youth and ways to promote leadership development and youth empowerment. Both organizations discussed potential partnerships on mental health initiatives and recognized the need for increased awareness and education on mental health issues among youth. President Abubakar emphasized the importance of creating a supportive environment for youth well-being, while Senator Khawaja appreciated the efforts of Pakistan Youth Parliament in promoting youth development and leadership.

The meeting marked a significant step towards fostering collaboration between Sindh Mental Health Authority and Pakistan Youth Parliament, on mental health and youth development initiatives. Both organizations are committed to working together to create a positive impact on the lives of young people in Sindh and Pakistan.

M s . Z a r e e n Q u r e s h i , a n A d v i s o r o f C h i l d r e n o f A d a m , V i s i t e d S M H A O f f i c e a n d M e t W i t h C h a i r m a n S M H A



Ms. Zareen Qureshi, an advisor from the organization Children of Adam, visited the Sindh Mental Health Authority's office and met with the Chairman, Senator Dr. Karim Ahmed Khawaja, to discuss mental health and other related issues.

An Opening Ceremony of Six days Mental Health Training Workshops for Doctors & Lady Health Workers as well as Research Orientation by SMHA at Tharparkar

An opening ceremony of six days mental health training workshops for doctors and lady health workers as well as research was organized under the umbrella of SMHA and in collaboration with District Health Department, Thar foundation, LUMHS and Sir CJIPBS in Mithi Tharparkar.



Dr. Karim Khawaja, Chairman of Sindh Mental Health Authority, stated that data from 5,000 people in Tharparkar district will be collected for comprehensive research, titled as Knowledge, Attitude and Practices about the mental health among the residents of district Tharparkar, under the supervision of Abdul Razzaque Nohri, principal investigator of this research.

On same day a training workshop on mental health was conducted for medical officers, where two sessions were conducted by two psychiatrists (Dr Manisha Kumari and Dr Bharat Kumar) and one research orientation

session by Dr Abdul Razzaque Nohri participants, followed by distribution of research questionnaires to all doctors.

The rest of the mental health training and research orientation workshops will be conducted in Islamkot, Diplo, Mithi and Nangarparkar.

Speaking at the workshop, Dr. Karim Khawaja, Chairman of the Sindh Mental Health Authority, said that we are working on mental health in Tharparkar district in collaboration with Thar Foundation, the Health Department, and other institutions. The purpose of the training workshop is to provide special training to a total of 100



doctors and 250 lady health workers in the district, enabling them to accurately diagnose individuals suffering from mental illnesses and collect data.

Farhan Ansari, General Manager of Thar Foundation, said that the purpose of the training workshop is to train lady health workers so that they can also educate the community about mental illnesses. This comprehensive training program and referral



system will help improve healthcare, meet medical needs, and overall enhance community health in the area.



During the workshop, Tharparkar DHO Dr. Lekhraj, Subhan Samejo, Dr. Haresh Jagani, Dr. Nisar Sohoo, and Subdar Shahani also spoke.

A large number of doctors, including Thar Foundation's Assistant Manager Health Fayaz Sheikh, Allahwadhaj Hajani, Alam Soomro, Mehwish, Ravi Prakash, Indus Health Network's Assistant Manager Ahsan

Ali Memon, Suresh Kumar, and Martha Kumari, participated and managed the



workshop.

The administration of Indus Hospital, along with Thar Foundation, set up a desk counter to provide information about the available health facilities, and brochures were also distributed among the participants.



SMHA Jointly with PILER, hosted a Significant Seminar on Suicide Prevention at the PILER Center, Karachi

The Sindh Mental Health Authority, jointly with Pakistan Institute of Labour Education & Research, hosted a significant seminar on suicide prevention on September 15, 2024, at Karachi. The seminar, brought together key experts and thought leaders to address the critical issue of suicide prevention in our society. The event featured a distinguished



panel of speakers, including Senator Dr. Karim Khawaja, Prof. Dr. Riaz Shaikh SZABIST, Prof. Dr. Iqbal Afridi, DNP, JSMU & Dean, Tony Buzan Academy, UK, Dr. Syed Zafar Mehdi, Secretary SMHA, Prof. Dr. Moin Ansari and Habib ud Junaidi, each offering unique perspectives and solutions. Senator Khawaja Karim opened the seminar with a compelling call for policy reform, stressing the need for comprehensive mental health policies at the national level. He emphasized the role of legislation in ensuring that mental health services are accessible and adequately funded. Dr. Iqbal Afridi, provided a deep dive into the psychological underpinnings of suicidal behavior. His presentation highlighted recent advancements in psychiatric treatment and the importance of early intervention and professional support in preventing suicides.

Dr. Riaz Shaikh, Dean at SZABIST, addressed the social dimensions of mental health and suicide prevention. Habib ud Junaidi, shared his experiences from the field, highlighting the intersection of mental health and labor rights. His insights emphasized the need for workplace mental health initiatives and the role of trade unions in advocating for mental health support. The seminar concluded with a robust panel discussion, where the speakers engaged with the audience, answering questions and discussing collaborative approaches to enhance suicide prevention efforts. The event



also featured a resource fair, offering attendees valuable information on mental health services and support networks. PILER and SMHA extend their sincere appreciation to all participants, speakers, and volunteers who contributed to the success of this seminar. Both organizations remain dedicated to advancing mental health awareness and implementing effective strategies to prevent suicide.

The Chairman of the Sindh Mental Health Authority called a meeting regarding mental health an upcoming event

The Chairman of the Sindh Mental Health Authority Senator Dr. Karim Ahmed Khawaja, called a meeting regarding an upcoming event, in which Prof. Dr.



Muhammad Iqbal Afridi, DNP, JSMU & Dean, Tony Buzan Academy, UK, Prof. Raza ur Rehman, Dean HMS Hamdard University, Prof. Dr. Moin Ahmed Ansari, Professor and Dean of Medicine, LUMHS, Dr. Syed Zafar Mehdi, Secretary SMHA, Prof. Dr. Riaz Shaikh, Dean SZABIST, Prof. Uzma Ali, Director, ICP University of Karachi, Dr. Chooni Lal, Head of Psychiatry JPMC, Dr.



Suresh Kumar, Prof. Dr. Qudsia Tariq, UoK, Prof. Sobia Aftab, Professor ICP, UoK, Adv. Riaz Hussain Baloch, Dr. Tooba Farooqi, IPP Behria University, Dr. Ajmal Mughal, Dr. Waseem Alvi, Prof. Dr. Salman Shahzad, UoK, Ms. Zareen Qureshi, CoA, Ms. Sanaa Ahmad, British Asian Trust, Mr. Ishaq Soomro, Mr. Aijaz Khuwaja, Mr. Jibran Sharif, PHC Global, Dr. Anand Kumar, DUHS, Ms. Rida Aslam, CoA, Ms. Saima Salim Mirza, CoA, Dr. Shaista Siddiqui, Mr. Shah, Director Jawaan Champion and Mr. Alam Soomro, BAT participated.

Sir Cowasjee JIP & BS Hyderabad celebrated World Mental Health Day

Sir Cowasjee Jahangir Institute of Psychiatry & Behavioural Sciences, Hyderabad celebrated the Mental Health Day 2024 for promoting Mental Health and Wellbeing at SCJIP Hospital Hyderabad on 10th October 2024. In the event Rally, Presentation, Panel discussion, Dramas, Tableaus and Music were conducted for mental health awareness. On behalf of Chairman Sindh Mental Health Authority Dr. Syed Zafar Mehdi Secretary SMHA were participated. In the event Dr. Nisar Sooho, Medical Superintendent, SCJIP Hospital welcome to all participants including doctors, pharmacists, nurses, paramedics, civil society, philanthropists, social workers, welfare organizations, and



NGOs who were actively participated in the celebration.

The Brain Trust and Pakistan Psychiatric Society Conducted A Symposium at Royal Society Of Medicine, London, UK



The Brain Trust and Pakistan Psychiatric Society conducted a Symposium titled "Bridging East & West: Prioritising Global



Health, Wellbeing, Education and Research" on 08 October & WMHD 2024, at ENT Room, Royal Society of Medicine, London, UK. In the Symposium Senator Dr. Karim Khawaja, Chairman, Sindh Mental Health Authority participated as Chair the "Closing Session - Next Steps and the Future of East-West Collaboration. others i.e. Pakistan High Commissioner Dr. Muhammad Faisal, Chief Guest Symposium, Deputy High Commissioner UK, Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Ikram Din Ujjan, Prof. Ahmed Ali Khan, Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Afridi, Mr. James

Billingham, Director, Billingham Communications, Professor Gillian Leng



President, Royal Society of Medicine, London, His Serene Highness, Prince Marek Kasperski, Mrs. Meher Khan, Prof. Majid Ali Abidi, Dr. G. Rasool, Prof. Dr. Wajid



Akhunzada, Associate Professor Dr. Jawed Dars and others Speakers and Guests also participated in the Symposium.

SMHA and SZABIST hosted a Roundtable Discussion on “Let’s Prioritize Mental Health in the Workplace”

The Sindh Mental Health Authority and Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Institute of Science and Technology hosted a roundtable discussion on “Let’s Prioritize Mental Health in the Workplace: Focusing on Fostering Mental Wellbeing within Professional Environments” at SZABIST University Karachi. The event brought together leading experts, policymakers, and representatives from various sectors to discuss the critical importance of mental health in the workplace and explore strategies for promoting a healthier and more supportive work environment.

Dr. Karim Khawaja, Chairman SMHA,



emphasized the need for legislative changes to mandate mental health support within organizations, government, semi government, autonomous, semi autonomous, private sector and particularly in sectors like law enforcement and educational institutions. Legislation to appoint Psychologist and Psychiatrist in these institutions. Dr. Altaf, Vice President, SZABIST shared experiences of providing mental health services to students and the positive impact on their academic performance. He further highlighted the



importance of finding the right teacher to teach morals and values to children. Dr. Riaz Ahmed Shaikh, SZABAST, highlighted how a capitalistic mindset, gender issues, and social intolerance are contributing to mental health problems.

Prof. Dr. Iqbal Afridi recommended psychological evaluations during recruitment processes and the establishment of MoUs between organizations and mental health service providers. Majid Ali Abidi, stressed the importance of preventive measures and early intervention in addressing mental health issues in the workplace. Associate Prof. Chunni Lal, HoD, JPMC, spoke about the need for HR departments to create a specific position dedicated to addressing mental health issues. Associate Prof. Dr. Javed Dars, HoD, NICH, endorsed collaboration and networking among stakeholders to promote mental health in the workplace.

Other key stakeholders, including Dr. Tooba Farooqi, IPP, BUKC, Dr. Khalida Tanveer, SZABIST, Dr. Niel Kanth, Dr. Sana Hussain, SZABIST, Dr. Ali Wasif, Dr. Waseem Alvi, also participated in the discussion.

The Chairman of SMHA met with Brig. Tarique Q. Lakhair, CEO, Sindh Integrated Emergency and Health Services 1122

On October 24, 2024, the Chairman of the Sindh Mental Health Authority Senator Dr. Karim Ahmed Khawaja met with Brig. Tarique Quadir Lakhair, Chief Executive Officer of Sindh Integrated Emergency and



Health Services 1122, at the SIESH head office in Karachi. The meeting focused on mental health and other relevant issues. Mr.

Muhammad Nawaz Sohoo, Secretary of the Cooperation Department, and Dr. Syed Zafar Mehdi, Secretary of the SMHA, also



participated.

Dialogue Session on Sindh's Position on Nature Gas organized by The Knowledge Forum

The Knowledge Forum, a Karachi-based think tank organized a dialogue session



“Consultation on Sindh’s Position on Natural Gas under the Constitutional Framework on Natural Resources.” on 7 November 2024, at Marriott Hotel Karachi, regarding dedicated to creating knowledge resources focused on human rights and development, supporting interventions, and advocating for community rights. In the Program Senator Dr. Karim



Khawaja, Senator Sassi Palejo, Senator Zamir Ghumro, Mr. Muhammad Hussain MPA, Engr sabir Hussain Kaim Khani MPA, Mr. Salahuddin Ahmed Barrister-at-Law Karachi, Mr. Adam Malik, Engr. Zahid Lashari, Qasim Soomro, Syeda Marvi Rashdi, Mr Syed Haider Imam Rizvi Advocate Supreme Court Khi, Manzoor sheikh, Sahab Osto, civil society, media persons and others were participated in the session.

The Tripartite MoU Signing Ceremony between Sindh Mental Health Authority, Department of Genetics, University of Karachi & Department of Psychiatry, Dow University of Health Sciences



The tripartite Memorandum of Understanding signing ceremony between the Sindh Mental Health Authority, Department of Genetics, University of Karachi and Department of Psychiatry, Dow University of Health Sciences on November 07, 2024.

This ceremony marked the commencement of a collaborative research project on the



genetic factors contributing to suicide cases in Thar and other adjoining areas. This trailblazing initiative aims to shed light on the complex factors underlying this pressing issue and develop preventive strategies. This is the first time in the history of Pakistan that this kind of research will be conducted.

Vice Chancellor, Prof. Dr. Khalid M. Iraqi presided over the MoU signing ceremony, Chairman, Sindh Mental Health Authority,



Senator Dr. Karim Khawaja, Registrar of the DUHS Dr. Ashar Afaq, Dr. Suresh Kumar, Prof. Dr. Farah Iqbal UoK, Dr. Syed Zafar Mehdi, Secretary SMHA, Chairperson of Department of Genetics, Prof. Maqsood Ali Ansari, HoD of Psychiatry, Prof. Dr. Washdev Amar, Dr. Syeda Hoor-ul-Ain, Director ORIC/KUBIC UoK, Eng. Zahid Hussain Lashari, Prof. Dr. Uzma Badar, Dr. Erum Shoaib, Dr. Fawad Qureshi, Dr. Rifat Ahmed, Dr. Ayesha Riaz and Dr. Aribah Naz also participated in the MoU signing ceremony.

SMHA successfully conducted three days Mental Health training to five District i.e. Larkana, Qambar Shahdadkot, Shikarpur, Jacobabad and Kandhkot



The Sindh Mental Health Authority (SMHA) has successfully commenced a three-day mental health training session aimed at enhancing the skills of healthcare professionals. Participants include members from the Health Department, PPHI, family physicians, and Lady Health Supervisors from five districts: Larkana, Qambar Shahdadkot, Shikarpur, Jacobabad, and Kandhkot. The training is being held at



Sambara Inn Hotel, Larkana. Day first successfully mental health training to the health professionals of the Larkana and Qambar Shahdadkot districts covered, round about 100 hundred doctors and family physicians were participated. The main objective of the SMHA is to increase mental

health awareness among healthcare providers and equip them with essential training to improve their capacity to identify, manage, and refer psychiatric patients to specialists. So far, SMHA has conducted



mental health training for general practitioners across 25 districts in Sindh, with three additional districts scheduled for completion in the coming days. The remaining districts will be covered by the end of this year. Prominent psychiatrists, including Prof. Dr. Badruddin Junejo, Prof. Dr. Rahmat Ali Wagan, and Associate Prof. Dr. Anoop Kumar Jusija, delivered lectures and presentations to the attendees. Speaking at the workshop, SMHA Chairman Dr. Karim Khawaja emphasized the authority's efforts to advance mental health support in Larkana Division in collaboration with the Health Department. He highlighted that this workshop aims to provide specialized training to approximately 500 doctors and Lady Health Supervisors across five districts, empowering them to diagnose mental health issues accurately and contribute to data collection.

District Health Officer Larkana, Dr. Shoukat Abro, extended a warm welcome to all



participants and commended the SMHA's initiatives. Dr. Shahnawaz Jatoi, District Health Officer of Qambar-Shahdadkot,



expressed his gratitude and offered a vote of thanks. During the session, SMHA Secretary Dr. Syed Zafar Mehdi addressed the shortage



of psychiatrists in Sindh, emphasizing that



the training equips general doctors, PPHI doctors, and Lady Health Supervisors with essential knowledge and procedures for mental health assessments and referrals. The



event saw participation from Health Department doctors, PPHI doctors, Lady Health Supervisors, media representatives, district administration officials, and others.



Chairman SMHA visited the Shrine of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto alongwith SMHA team

During the three days Mental health training session to the health professionals of five Districts, Senator Dr. Karim Ahmed Khawaja, Chairman, Sindh Mental Health Authority visited Shrine of Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto at Garhi Khuda Bux Larkana on 11th



November, 2024 alongwith SMHA team and



others i.e. Dr. Syed Zafar Mehdi, Secretary SMHA, Medical Superintendent CMC Hospital Larkana, Mr. Muhammad Irshad, Director SMHA, Mr. Majid Khan Solangi, SMHA, Mr. Mushtaq Khaskheli, SMHA.

Senator Dr. Karim Khawaja visited the renowned city Moin-Jo-Daro

During the 2nd day of Mental health training session to the health professionals of five Districts, Senator Dr. Karim Ahmed Khawaja, Chairman, Sindh Mental Health



Authority visited the renowned city Moin-Jo-Daro and it's Museum on 12th November, 2024 alongwith SMHA team and others i.e.



Dr. Syed Zafar Mehdi, Secretary SMHA, Mr. Ahmed Bux Pirzado, Mr. Muhammad Irshad, Director SMHA, Mr. Majid Khan Solangi, SMHA, Mr. Mushtaq Khaskheli, SMHA and Syed Aijaz Jaferi, SMHA.

S M H A s u c c e s s f u l l y c o n d u c t e d t h r e e d a y s m e n t a l h e a l t h t r a i n i n g t o d o c t o r s o f S u k k u r D i v i s i o n i . e . S u k k u r , L a r k a n a & G h o t k i

Sindh Mental Health Authority conducted a three-day mental health training program to



the health professionals of Sukkur Division (Sukkur, Khairpu, Ghotki), from 2nd December to 4th December, 2024. On first day, Khairpur District's, second day Sukkur and third day Ghotki's health professionals including members from the Health Department, PPHI and Lady Health Supervisors, round about 250 plus were



participated. The training is being held at Auditorium Hall, Mehran University Campus Khairpur and in Pakistan Club Inn Hotel, Sukkur. The main objective of the SMHA is to increase mental health awareness among healthcare providers and

equip them with essential training to improve their capacity to identify, manage, and refer psychiatric patients to specialists. So far, SMHA has successfully conducted mental health training for general practitioners across 30 districts in whole Sindh. Sindh



Province is to be now first province where mental health training session successfully conducted in whole Districts. Prominent psychiatrists, including Prof. Dr. Chooni Lal, Head of Psychiatry Deptt. JPMC, Associate Prof. Dr. Inayat Awan, GMM Medical College, Sukkur, Dr. Ghulam Rasool, GMMMC Sukkur, Associate Prof. Dr.



Anoop Kumar Jusija, Dr. Saeed Memon,

GIMS Gambat, Dr. Amjad Baloch GIMS Gambat Dr. Bakhtawar Shaikh, FCPS Psychiatrist delivered lectures and presentations to the attendees. Speaking at



the session, Senator Dr. Karim Khawaja, Chairman, SMHA emphasized the authority's efforts to advance mental health support in Sukkur Division in collaboration



with the Health Department. He highlighted



that this workshop aims to provide



specialized training to approximately 250 doctors and Lady Health Supervisors across three districts, empowering them to diagnose mental health issues accurately and contribute to data collection. The workshop



was a vital step towards strengthening mental health care at the grassroots level and



fostering research that addresses local health challenges.



SMHA and Health Department remain committed to continuing such collaborative efforts to improve public health outcomes. The Training was attended by Dr. Parvez Ahmed Shaikh, Deputy DG



Health, Dr. Aijaz Ahmed Abbasi, Deputy DG Health (NCD), Dr. Syed Zafar Mehdi, Dr. Azeem Memon, Deputy Director Health, Dr. Shahid, ADHO Khairpur, district administration's officials and others.



Chairman SMHA along with SMHA team visited Kotdiji Fort

During the first day of Mental health training session to the health professionals of three



Districts i.e. Sukkur, Khairpur and Ghotki, Senator Dr. Karim Ahmed Khawaja,

Chairman, Sindh Mental Health Authority visited the "Kotdiji Fort" on 2nd December,



2024 alongwith Dr. Parvez Ahmed Shaikh,



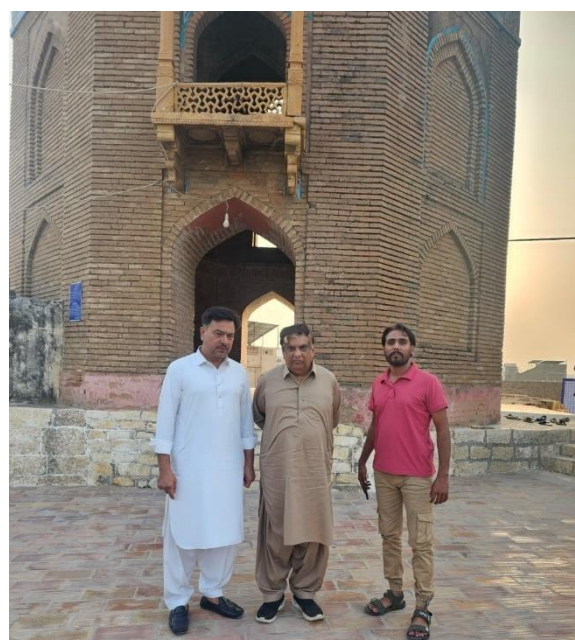
Deputy DG Health, Dr. Aijaz Ahmed Abbasi, Deputy DG Health (NCD), Dr. Syed Zafar Mehdi, Dr. Azeem Memon, Deputy Director Health and SMHA team i.e. Mr. Majid Khan Solangi, SMHA, Mr. Mushtaq Khaskheli, SMHA and Syed Aijaz Jaferi, SMHA.



Chairman SMHA visited Masoom Shah Minaar and Dargah Roze Dhani (Pir Pagara)



During the three days Mental health training session to the health professionals of three



Districts of Sukkur Division, after second day training session Senator Dr. Karim



Ahmed Khawaja, Chairman, Sindh Mental Health Authority visited Masoom Shah Minaar and then also visited Dargah Roze Dhani (Pir Pagarah) in Pir Jo Goth Khairpur on 3rd December, 2024 along with SMHA team and others i.e. Dr. Syed Zafar Mehdi,



Secretary SMHA, Mr. Siraj Mangrio, Mr. Majid Khan Solangi, SMHA, Mr. Mushtaq Khaskheli, SMHA and Syed Aijaz Jaferi, SMHA.

Chairman SMHA visited Sadhu Bella Mandir and Satyun Jo Aastano



During the three days Mental health training session to the health professionals of three Districts i.e. Sukkur, Khairpur and Ghotki, Senator Dr. Karim Ahmed Khawaja, Chairman, Sindh Mental Health Authority visited the "Sadhu Bella Mandir" and "Satyun Jo Aastano" at Sukkur on 4th December, 2024 along with Dr. Syed Zafar

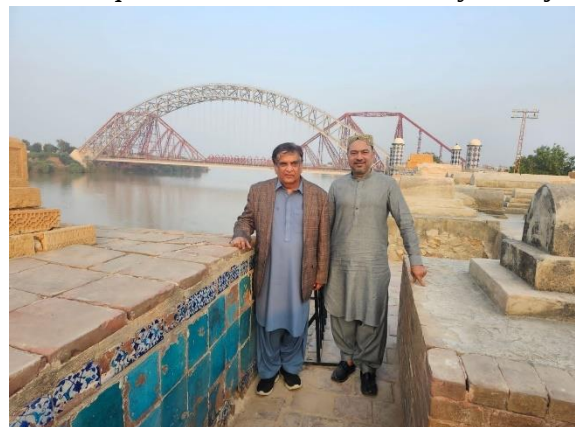


Mehdi, Secretary SMHA, Mr. Deewan Chauhan, representative of Commissioner Sukkur, Mr. Siraj Mangrio and SMHA team

i.e. Mr. Majid Khan Solangi, SMHA, Mr.



Mushtaq Khaskheli, SMHA and Syed Aijaz



Jaferi, SMHA.

Chairman SMHA visited GIMS institute Gambat and met with Director GIMS



Senator Dr. Karim Ahmed Khawaja, Chairman of the Sindh Mental Health

in Gambat and met with Dr. Rahim Bux Bhatti, the Director of GIMS on 5th Decembe, 2024. During the meeting, Dr. Khawaja proposed the establishment of a



Authority, visited the Pir Abdul Qadir Shah Jeelani Institute of Medical Science (GIMS)

150-bed Gambat Institute of Psychiatry and Behavioral Science within the Institute. He further stated that a temporary ward would be operational at GIMS until the new Institute opens. On this occasion Dr. Syed Zafar Mehdi, Secretary of the SMHA, and Dr. Wazir Phul also participated in the meeting. After the meeting, Dr. Rahim Bux showed Dr. Khawaja and others around the entire Institute. Dr. Khawaja appreciated the efforts and hard work of Dr. Rahim Bux in establishing the GIMS institute at Gambat.

Chairman SMHA along with team visited Shrine of Sachal Sarmast



After completing a three-day mental health training session for health professionals in Sukkur Division, Senator Dr. Karim Ahmed Khawaja, Chairman of the Sindh Mental Health Authority, visited the Shrine of Sachal Sarmast at Gambat on December 5, 2024, accompanied by Dr. Syed Zafar Mehdi, Secretary SMHA, Dr. Wazir Phul, and the SMHA team i.e. Mr. Majid Khan Solangi, SMHA, Mr. Mushtaq Khaskheli, SMHA and Syed Aijaz Jaferi, SMHA



Ms. Rabia Mirza, Chairperson, Hope for all Social development organization and Mr. Naseem A. Bhutto visited SMHA office

Ms. Rabia Mirza, Chairperson, Hope for all Social development organization and Mr. Naseem A. Bhutto visited SMHA office and met with Senator Dr. Karim Ahmed Khawaja, Chairman, Sindh Mental Health Authority regarding discussion on mental health issues and other matters.



SMHA successfully completed a Pivotal Research Study on the resident of Tharparkar

Under the aegis of the Sindh Mental Health Authority (SMHA), and in collaboration with key partners including the Health Department, Government of Sindh, Liaquat University of Medical & Health Sciences (LUMHS), Jamshoro, Thar Foundation, and



the Sir Cowasji Jehangir Institute of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences, Hyderabad, a pivotal research study titled "Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices (KAP) Among the Residents of Tharparkar" has been successfully completed. The Opening Ceremony of the Research study to be held on 11th December, 2024 at Pakistan Medical Association (PMA House) Karachi. This research marks another milestone in the series of mental health initiatives



spearheaded by Senator Dr. Karim Ahmed Khawaja, Chairman of SMHA, who has prioritized mental health research in Sindh. The Research study conducted from September to November 2024, this descriptive cross-sectional study encompassed all seven talukas of



Tharparkar—Diplo, Mithi, Islamkot, Nangarparkar, Chachro, Dahli, and Kaloi. A sample of 5,378 participants was selected through random sampling, with 250 trained Lady Health Workers (LHWs) collecting data via structured interviews and questionnaires. The Ceremony Presided by MNA Dr. Mahesh Malani and Chief Guest was Prof. Dr. Muhammad Saeed Quraishy, Vice Chancellor, Dow University.



Senator Dr. Karim Khawaja welcome to all participants and brief them the main purpose of this Research Study. In the opening ceremony DIG Prison Mr. Hassan Abbasi,



Brig (R) Tarique Quadir Lakhair, CEO, SIEHS, Dr. Aijaz Abbasi, Deputy DG Health Service, Dr. Syed Zafar Mehdi, Secretary



SMHA, Prof. Dr. Maqsood Ansari, Head of Genetic Dept. UoK, Mr. Farhan Ansari, G.M, Thar Foundation, Brig (R) Dr. Shoaib

Ahmed, Executive Director, IBS, Prof. Dr. Uzma Ali, Director, ICP, Prof. Dr. Ilyas Siddique, Head of Community Health



LUMHS, Prof. Dr. Washdev, Head of Psychiatry Deptt. Dow University, Prof. Dr. Farah Iqbal, Prof. Dr. Sobia Aftab, Dr. Ajmal Mughal, Senior Psychiatrist, Dr. Nisar Ahmed Soho, Medical Superintendent, SCJIPBS, Dr. Suresh Kumar, Dr. Jaipal Chhabrial, Dr. Greech, Ex-DHO, Dr. Gulzar LUMHS, Dr. Abdul Razzaq Nohri, Principal investigator of Research, Dr. Bharat Kumar, Mr. Fayyaz Ahmed Shaikh, Dr. Tooba Farooqi, Ms. Mahnoor Shah, Dr. Ismail



Memon, Vice President PMA (Karachi), Dr. Aftab Ahmed, Hon, G.S PMA Karachi, Dr. Sidra Ahmed (PMA), Comrade Jannat, Dr. Dilshad Khawaja, Dr. Prem Malhi, Dr. Insaf Mangsi, Mr. Majid Solangi, civil society, media persons and others were participated in the large number.

Launching of book "Senator Dr. Karim Ahmed Khawaja, A Legislative Odyssey" by Fareed Publishers



Fareed Publishers today launched the book "Senator Dr. Karim Ahmed Khawaja, A Legislative Odyssey" at Hall No. 2, Expo Center Karachi. The book's author, Senator Dr. Karim Ahmed Khawaja, was the Chief Guest of the launching ceremony. Among those in attendance were Mr. Shahid Jatoi,



Mr. Saeed Khawar (Writer and Journalist), Advocate Riaz Baloch (Principal, Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Law College Malir), Mr. Mirza Baig (General Secretary PMA), Prof. Dr. Amin Khawaja, Dr. Jaipal Chhaprial (Social Activist and Event Conductor), Mr.



Dara Ali Khawaja, Mr. Aftab Memon, Mr. Muhammad Irshad, Mr. Majid Solangi, Mr.



Muhammad Faisal, and over 100 other guests participated.



13th Board of Governors meeting conducted by Sindh Mental Health Authority

The 13th Board of Governors' meeting of the Sindh Mental Health Authority (SMHA) was



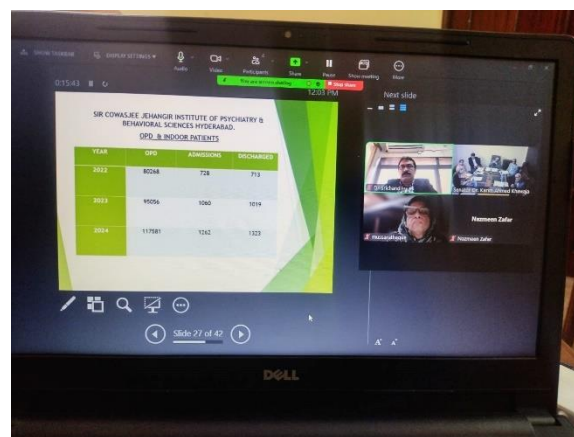
held under the chairmanship of Senator Dr. Karim Ahmed Khawaja. During the meeting, agenda items were discussed one by one. Dr. Syed Zafar Mehdi, Secretary SMHA, briefed the members. Attendees included



Meritorious Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Afridi, Prof. Raza ur Rehman, Dr. Nisar Ahmed Soho (Medical Superintendent, Sir Cowasji Jahangir Institute of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Hyderabad), Dr.



Rubeena Kidwai, Dr. Sri Chand (Section Officer, representing the Secretary of Health), Mr. Irfan Ali Arain (Section Officer, representing the Additional Secretary (Tech) of the Health Department), Dr. Aijaz Abbasi (Deputy General, Health Services Hyderabad, representing the D.G. Health), Prof. Moin Ahmed Ansari, Dr. Yar Jamali (Medical Superintendent, People Medical College Hospital Nawabshah / SBA), and Madam Mussarat Jabeen participated in the meeting via Zoom link.



Senator Dr. Karim Khawaja visited the Peoples Doctors Forum Eye Camp and also the Shrines of Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto



On the 27th of December, Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto's Martyrdom Day, Senator Dr. Karim Ahmed Khawaja visited the Peoples Doctors Forum Eye Camp and also the Shrines of Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali



(DHO Larkana), Dr. Ayoub Baloch, Afzal Abro, and others were also present. Senator Khawaja also visited the 1122 Camp, the DHO Larkana Camp, and the Chandka Medical Hospital Camp, where he interacted with doctors and staff.



Bhutto and Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto at Garhi Khuda Bux, Larkana . Senator Gian Chand, Dr. Shaukat Ali Abro



Cyberbullying and Depressive Symptomology

**Dr Sheeba Farhan, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology –
Federal Urdu University of Arts, Science and Technology**

Bullying has existed in the civilised history of the world where a student coming from school complained about being bullied for his appearance, kind of background he belonged to, for not being able to afford sumptuous meals in lunchboxes, and so forth. This traditional way of carrying out the act of intimidation proved to be potentially subversive for the students having adverse effects on the mental life of the victims. Traditional bullying despite offering a numbers of obstacles to its victims in their mental and emotional development, had an upside of tracking down the bullies and mitigate the problematic situation.

This was made possible as it is easier to locate the source of bullying in a traditional physical situation of classrooms, playgrounds etc. Conversely, in the digital world of social media, locating the source of bullying has become painfully impossible. Bullies sitting across the other side of the screen, often are concealed behind the walls of fake accounts. In this way, they are almost impossible to be located and loam free in the unchartered digital world. This form of bullying is termed as Cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying is defined as repeated and intentional harm inflicted through the use of electronic communication technologies (Hinduja & Patchin, 2015). Cyberbullying can manifest itself in different forms, including verbal harassment, social exclusion, and cyberstalking (Kowalski et al., 2014).

Cyberbullying also can have sheer negative effects on mental health, including increased risk for depression and anxiety (Kowalski et al., 2014). The

source of Cyberbullying are a variety of platforms, including social media, text messaging, and email (Hinduja & Patchin, 2015). Additionally, Cyberbullying can have long-lasting effects on mental health, including increased risk for suicidal ideation and behavior (Kowalski et al., 2014).

As the means of communication became digitised, the challenges that followed the digital revolution became persistent and unavoidable. The modern problem of cyberbullying is also the brainchild of technology-driven world. As the cyber security situation escalated, and the number cyberbullying victimization soared, the psychological illnesses induced by the virtual attackers became ever more palpable. This became the object of research of the psychologists and researchers who identified and well documented the various mental illnesses the victims demonstrated.

The prevalence of cyberbullying victimization has been extensively studied across various populations. Research by Hinduja and Patchin (2018) reported that approximately 34% of adolescents in the United States experienced some form of cyberbullying victimization. Similarly, a study conducted by Kowalski et al. (2014) found that 20% of adolescents in Europe reported being victims of cyberbullying. These statistics highlight the alarming frequency of cyberbullying victimization and emphasize the need for further investigation into its underlying complexities.

The detrimental effects of cyberbullying victimization on individual's mental and emotional well-being have been widely documented. Research by Schneider et al. (2012) indicated that victims of cyberbullying often experience higher levels of psychological distress, including depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem. Additionally, victims may encounter academic difficulties, social isolation, and even physical health problems (Patchin & Hinduja, 2017). Longitudinal studies, such as the one conducted by Beran and Li (2007), have demonstrated the long-lasting impact of cyberbullying victimization, with adverse effects persisting into adulthood.

Understanding the factors that contribute to cyberbullying victimization is crucial for developing effective prevention and intervention strategies. Researchers have identified various risk factors associated with cyberbullying victimization, including low self-esteem, limited social support, prior experiences of traditional bullying, and online disinhibition (Wang et al., 2018). Additionally, characteristics such as gender, age, and socio-economic status can also increase the likelihood of becoming a cyberbullying victim (Tokunaga, 2010). It is essential to consider these factors when implementing preventive measures and promoting digital resilience.

Efforts to combat cyberbullying victimization have focused on multifaceted interventions involving multiple stakeholders, such as schools, parents, and online service providers. Schools can play a vital role in creating safe and supportive environments through comprehensive anti-bullying policies, educating students about responsible online behavior, and fostering empathy and digital citizenship skills (Li, 2019). Parental involvement and open communication have also been found to mitigate the effects of cyberbullying victimization (Doane et al., 2019). Moreover, collaborations with technology companies to implement advanced algorithms and reporting mechanisms are essential in deterring and addressing cyberbullying incidents effectively (Livingstone et al., 2020).

The victimization of cyberbullying poses significant challenges to individuals and society at large. Understanding the prevalence, effects, contributing factors, and interventions related to cyberbullying victimization is crucial for developing evidence-based strategies to prevent and mitigate its harmful impact. Further research is needed to explore emerging trends in cyberbullying, adapt interventions to evolving online platforms, and evaluate the effectiveness of preventive measures.

G e n d e r a n d M e n t a l H e a l t h : A r e W o m e n M o r e P r o n e t o A n x i e t y a n d D e p r e s s i o n ?

**Dr Hina Qasim Memon, Gynaecologist and Public Health Specialist - Health Department,
Government of Sindh**

Mental health challenges are universal, transcending gender, age, and socioeconomic boundaries. Yet, a growing body of research suggests that women are disproportionately affected by anxiety and depression. The question remains: are women biologically, socially, or culturally predisposed to these mental health conditions, or is the disparity a reflection of systemic factors that shape women's lived experiences? Understanding the complex interplay of biology, environment, and societal expectations is crucial to answering this question and, more importantly, addressing the gender gap in mental health care.

The Biological Perspective

Biological factors undeniably play a role in mental health, and women face unique challenges due to hormonal fluctuations and reproductive health cycles. Puberty, menstruation, pregnancy, postpartum, and menopause bring about significant hormonal changes that can influence mood and emotional well-being. For instance, conditions like premenstrual dysphoric disorder (PMDD) and postpartum depression are exclusive to women and underscore the link between hormonal shifts and mental health.

Research has also shown that women's brains respond differently to stress compared to men's. Elevated levels of cortisol, the stress hormone, have been observed in women experiencing anxiety and depression. Moreover, some studies suggest that women may have a heightened sensitivity to stress due to differences in the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis, which regulates the body's stress response. While these biological factors contribute to the

higher prevalence of anxiety and depression among women, they are only part of the story.

The Role of Social and Cultural Factors

Society's expectations and cultural norms often place additional pressure on women, contributing to mental health disparities. Women are frequently expected to juggle multiple roles—caretaker, professional, partner, and community member—without adequate support. This "superwoman" expectation can lead to chronic stress and burnout, both precursors to anxiety and depression.

Additionally, women are more likely than men to experience gender-based violence, including domestic abuse, sexual assault, and harassment. These traumatic experiences can leave long-lasting psychological scars and significantly increase the risk of developing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, and depression. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), one in three women globally experiences physical or sexual violence in her lifetime, highlighting the staggering scope of this issue.

Economic inequality further exacerbates mental health challenges for women. In many societies, women are paid less than men for the same work, are more likely to hold precarious or lower-paying jobs, and often bear the brunt of unpaid labor, such as caregiving. Financial stress, coupled with limited access to mental health resources, creates a vicious cycle that disproportionately affects women.

Stigma and the Gendered Experience of Mental Health

Cultural stigma surrounding mental health remains a significant barrier to care, and women often face unique challenges in seeking help. While women are generally more likely than men to acknowledge mental health issues and seek support, they may encounter societal judgment or be dismissed as "overly emotional." This dismissiveness can discourage women from pursuing the treatment they need and deserve.

Intersectionality adds another layer of complexity to this issue. Women from marginalized communities—whether due to race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status—often face compounded stigma. For instance, women of color may experience both racial and gender discrimination, which can exacerbate mental health challenges and create additional barriers to care.

Understanding the Numbers

Statistics consistently show that women are diagnosed with anxiety and depression at higher rates than men. According to the American Psychiatric Association, women are nearly twice as likely as men to be diagnosed with generalized anxiety disorder or major depressive disorder. However, these numbers may also reflect biases in how mental health conditions are identified and reported.

Men often express mental health struggles through externalizing behaviors, such as aggression or substance abuse, which may lead to underdiagnosis of internalizing disorders like anxiety and depression. On the other hand, women's symptoms—such as persistent sadness, excessive worry, or difficulty concentrating—align more closely with traditional diagnostic criteria, making their conditions more likely to be recognized and treated.

Addressing the Gender Gap in Mental Health

Closing the gender gap in mental health care requires a multifaceted approach. First,

greater emphasis must be placed on educating healthcare providers about gender differences in mental health to ensure that women receive accurate diagnoses and appropriate treatment. Recognizing the unique challenges faced by women, such as hormonal fluctuations and gender-based violence, can lead to more tailored interventions.

Policy changes are also essential. Governments & organizations should prioritize gender equality in workplace, provide better access to affordable mental health services & strengthen protections against gender based violence. Initiatives such as paid family leave, affordable childcare & workplace wellness programs can help alleviate some of burdens women face.

On an individual level, women can benefit from building strong support networks, practicing self-care, and seeking professional help when needed. Community-based programs that promote mental health awareness and provide accessible resources can empower women to take charge of their mental well-being without fear of stigma.

A Call to Action

While women may be more prone to anxiety and depression due to a combination of biological, social, and cultural factors, this reality is not inevitable. Addressing systemic inequities, breaking down stigma, and providing targeted support can significantly improve mental health outcomes for women. Mental health is not a women's issue or a men's issue—it is a human issue, one that requires collective action and commitment.

As we work toward a more equitable future, let us not only acknowledge the unique challenges women face but also celebrate their resilience. By understanding and addressing the factors that contribute to gender disparities in mental health, we can pave the way for a world where everyone—regardless of gender—has the opportunity to thrive.

M e n t a l H e a l t h i n T h a r p a r k a r : A G l i m p s e I n t o C h a l l e n g e s A n d O p p o r t u n i t i e s

Dr Abdul Razzaque Nohri, Public Health Specialist and Senior Pharmacist (B-18) - Health Department, Government of Sindh

Mental health remains an underrepresented aspect of public health in many parts of the world, including Pakistan. In this context, the Sindh Mental Health Authority (SMHA) conducted a pivotal study to explore the knowledge, attitudes, and practices surrounding mental health among the residents of Tharparkar, a district marked by socio-economic challenges, cultural diversity, and unique mental health needs. This article synthesizes the findings of the study, shedding light on the region's struggles and the way forward.

Understanding the Mental Health Landscape in Tharparkar

Tharparkar is a district in Sindh province characterized by its arid terrain, high poverty rates, and limited access to healthcare. Mental health challenges in the region have gained attention due to rising suicide rates, particularly among young people and women. The SMHA's study, conducted between September and November 2024, surveyed over 5,000 residents to gain insights into their knowledge, attitudes, and practices related to mental health. The principal investigator of this research was Dr Abdul Razzaque Nohri.

Key Findings

1. Knowledge of Mental Health Issues:

While 52.55% of respondents were aware of mental health issues, over half (53%) demonstrated poor knowledge. Misconceptions were prevalent, with many attributing mental illnesses to past sins (35.57%) or supernatural causes (28.32%). Only 36.11% correctly identified mental health conditions as medical issues.

2. Attitudes Toward Mental Health:

Stigma was a recurring theme. Nearly 69.8% believed mental illnesses to be contagious, and 88.23% reported fear of interacting with individuals with mental health conditions. Furthermore, 63.61% doubted the possibility of recovery, highlighting a need for public education to improve perceptions.

3. Practices and Barriers:

A significant 27.98% cited financial constraints as the main barrier to seeking mental health care, followed by a lack of awareness (15.98%) and stigma (9.99%). Family and community stigma was evident, with 81.61% acknowledging familial shame and 86.98% recognizing that communities demoralize mental health patients.

4. Access to Services:

Although 83.99% supported referring patients to professional consultants, only 43.99% reported accompanying patients to such consultations, indicating a lack of practical support.

Contributing Factors

The challenges in Tharparkar stem from a combination of socio-economic, cultural, and systemic issues:

- **Poverty:** With 56% of respondents earning less than 15,000 PKR monthly, financial hardships limit access to healthcare.
- **Education:** Nearly 46% of participants were uneducated, contributing to poor awareness and reliance on cultural beliefs.
- **Cultural and Religious Beliefs:** Misattributions of mental health issues to supernatural causes and sins hinder acceptance of medical interventions.

Recommendations for Improvement

The study underscores the need for a multi-faceted approach to address the mental health crisis in Tharparkar:

- 1. Awareness Campaigns:**
Launch culturally sensitive

campaigns to dispel myths, reduce stigma, and promote evidence-based understanding of mental health.

2. Improved Access to Care:

Establish more mental health clinics and mobile units, particularly in underserved areas, and expand tele-psychiatry services.

3. Future Research

It is recommended to have future research on drug dependence and genetic research.

4. Youth and Family-Focused Interventions:

Introduce school-based mental health programs and family-oriented support systems to address stress and provide coping mechanisms.

5. Socio-Economic Initiatives:

Alleviate poverty through targeted programs, such as disaster relief and agricultural support, to address the root causes of mental distress.

6. Capacity Building:

Train healthcare providers in culturally sensitive mental health care and engage community leaders in awareness efforts.

Community-Based Support:

Create local support groups and involve religious leaders to foster a supportive environment for mental health patients.

The Stigma attached with People Working in a Psychiatry Institute

Dr. Parveen Channer, Additional Medical Superintendent/Psychiatrist - Sir CJ Institute of Psychiatry Hyderabad

Having worked in a psychiatry institute for 12 years, I have had the opportunity to interact with employees from various cadres. I often wonder if they are different from people working in other institutes. Is their behavior influenced by the institute they work in? Is the same stigma attached to psychiatric patients also attached to employees working in psychiatric institutes?

From my observations, employees working in psychiatric institutes experience the same range of emotions and feelings as people in the broader community. They face ups and downs in life, but their reactions to life situations are often judged and labeled due to their affiliation with the psychiatry institute. This can be unfair and criticism can be harsh.

The problem arises when individuals with pre-existing psychiatric issues are posted to work in a psychiatry institute. In such cases, they may struggle to cope with the emotional demands of the job, particularly when dealing with patients. This can exacerbate their existing condition.

It is also concerning to note that some individuals with pre-existing psychiatric problems are intentionally posted to work in psychiatry institutes with the assumption that they may benefit from the environment and recover. However, in reality, the opposite often occurs. The stress and emotional demands of working in a psychiatry institute can worsen their condition, rather than improve it. This approach can be counterproductive and may even lead to further deterioration of their mental health.

Moreover, working in a mental health facility can be emotionally draining for mental health workers. It is challenging for them to absorb the information shared by patients with different psychiatric illnesses and maintain their emotional integrity. The constant exposure to traumatic stories, emotional distress, and high-stress environments can take a toll on their mental well-being.

Therefore, it is essential for all individuals working in mental health facilities to prioritize their own mental health. We advise

that they take time to relax, enjoy, and engage in healthy activities, such as traveling, spending time with friends and family, and taking breaks from busy outpatient departments. Simple pleasures like enjoying a cup of coffee or tea can also help to reduce stress and improve mood. By doing so, mental health workers can protect their mental health, maintain their resilience, and provide better care for their patients.

Furthermore, if a mental health worker is facing a psychiatric problem during their work, it is crucial that they feel comfortable discussing it with their colleagues and seeking help instead of hiding it. Unfortunately, the stigma surrounding mental health issues can lead to secrecy and silence, which can worsen the problem. We encourage mental health workers to break this silence and reach out to their peers, supervisors, or employee assistance programs for support. By creating a culture

of openness and support, we can help mental health workers address their own mental health needs and ensure that they receive the care and resources they need to thrive in their roles.

To mitigate the risks associated with working in a psychiatry institute, we recommend that employees be screened for any prior psychiatric problems before being posted to such a facility. It is crucial to assess whether an individual is emotionally equipped to work in such an environment. By taking proactive steps to support the mental health of our employees, we can ensure that they are better equipped to provide high-quality care for their patients and maintain their own well-being.

E m p o w e r i n g I n d i v i d u a l w i t h A u t i s m a n d R e s p o n s i b i l i t i e s o f G o v e r n m e n t o f P a k i s t a n

Dr Noshaba Nafees Abro, Consult Gynaecologist Larkana

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a neurodevelopmental condition that affects communication, social interaction, and behavior. In Pakistan, individuals with autism face significant challenges, including limited access to quality education, healthcare, and employment opportunities. To empower individuals with autism and foster their inclusion in society, the Pakistani government must take a proactive role.

Key Responsibilities of the Pakistani Government:

1. Early Intervention and Diagnosis:

Establish Early Intervention Centers: Setting up easily accessible centers in urban and rural areas for early diagnosis and intervention is crucial. Early identification allows for timely support services, significantly improving long-term outcomes.

Train Healthcare Professionals: Equip healthcare providers, including pediatricians and primary care physicians, to recognize the signs and symptoms of autism.

2. Inclusive Education:

Teacher Training: Implement mandatory training programs for teachers on autism awareness, inclusive teaching methodologies, and the use of assistive technologies.

Resource Allocation: Allocate adequate resources to schools for creating inclusive learning environments, including providing assistive technologies, modifying curricula, and employing specialized educators.

3. Accessible Healthcare:

Ensure Availability of Therapies: Make essential therapies, such as speech therapy, occupational therapy, and behavioral therapy, readily available and affordable.

Develop a Comprehensive Healthcare System: Create a robust healthcare system that addresses the specific needs of individuals with autism throughout their lifespan.

4. Skill Development and Employment:

Vocational Training Programs: Establish vocational training programs tailored to the strengths and interests of individuals with autism, equipping them with employable skills.

Promote Inclusive Employment: Encourage private and public sector organizations to create inclusive workplaces that accommodate the needs of individuals with autism.

5. Community Awareness and Support:

Public Awareness Campaigns:

Launch widespread campaigns to raise awareness about autism, dispel myths and misconceptions, and promote acceptance and inclusion.

Support for Families: Provide comprehensive support services to families of individuals with autism, including counseling, respite care, and access to support groups.

The Importance of Active Participation in Sports

Physical activity offers numerous benefits for individuals with autism, including:

Improved Physical Health: Regular exercise enhances cardiovascular health, strengthens muscles, and improves coordination.

Enhanced Social Skills: Team sports and recreational activities provide opportunities for social interaction, communication, and teamwork.

Reduced Anxiety and Stress: Physical activity can help regulate emotions, reduce anxiety, and improve overall well-being.

Increased Self-Esteem: Achieving goals and participating in sports can boost self-confidence and a sense of accomplishment.

The government should actively promote and facilitate access to adapted sports programs for individuals with autism. This can be achieved through:

Establishing accessible sports facilities: Creating inclusive sports facilities with appropriate equipment and modifications.

Training sports coaches and instructors: Providing training on working with individuals with autism and adapting sports activities to their needs.

Organizing inclusive sports events: Hosting inclusive sports events and competitions to encourage participation and foster a sense of community.

By implementing these measures, the Pakistani government can play a pivotal role in empowering individuals with autism, enabling them to lead fulfilling and independent lives.

Empowering Through Noor: Transforming Suicide Prevention Practices

Mental health has long been a whispered topic in many parts of our society, but Noor, an inspiring mental health initiative, is breaking barriers and rewriting the narrative. Recently, Noor hosted a transformative workshop on Trauma-Informed Suicide Prevention and Risk Assessment at the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre. Led by the accomplished Carolina Zapata Estévez, this event empowered participants to tackle mental health crises with compassion and



expertise, leaving a lasting impact on all involved.

Noor, founded by Mahnoor Shah under the Community Engagement Exchange (CEE) Program by the U.S. State Department, has emerged as a beacon of hope for those grappling with mental illness. With its focus on depression and suicide awareness, Noor is equipping communities with tools to foster healing and resilience. By employing a trauma-informed approach, Noor has been instrumental in creating spaces where open conversations about mental health are not only encouraged but also celebrated.



Carolina Zapata Estévez, the driving force behind this workshop, brought her vast experience and empathetic insight to the fore. As a human rights advocate with over 12 years of experience, she has dedicated her career to supporting vulnerable populations. Her leadership at Heartland Alliance International in the Dominican Republic and her expertise in designing mental health programs for marginalized communities were evident throughout the workshop. Carolina's approach emphasized understanding, cultural sensitivity, and compassion, which resonated deeply with participants.

The workshop targeted healthcare professionals, allied health workers, and non-profit managers, providing them with the skills to assess suicidal ideation, identify risk factors, and implement trauma-informed protocols. The interactive sessions included role-plays and open discussions, fostering a deeper understanding of the complexities of mental health crises. For many, these sessions were not just educational but transformative, reframing the way they viewed and approached mental health care.

One of the most striking aspects of this workshop was its ripple effect. Participants reported feeling more confident in their

ability to address mental health concerns and intervene effectively. Many described the experience as life-changing, noting how it broadened their understanding of trauma's impact and the importance of empathy in professional settings. This collective shift in perspective signals a step forward in building a mental health ecosystem that prioritizes care and understanding.

The success of this initiative would not have been possible without the invaluable support of key individuals. Noor extends heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Karim Ahmed Khawaja, Chairman of the Sindh Mental Health Authority, whose dedication to enhancing mental health services has been pivotal. Dr. Chuni Lal, Head of the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre, also played a crucial role by providing a platform for this initiative and contributing his insights. Their leadership and commitment to mental health advocacy exemplify the collaborative spirit needed to create meaningful change.

Workshops like these underscore the importance of integrating trauma-informed care into mental health practices. By acknowledging the profound influence of adverse experiences, trauma-informed frameworks foster environments where healing and resilience can thrive. This

workshop illuminated these principles, inspiring participants to carry these lessons forward in their personal and professional lives. The focus on judgment-free care and proactive intervention strategies ensures that the knowledge gained will have far-reaching implications.

As the workshop concluded, its impact was palpable. The 30 participants and 8 team members left with not only practical skills but also a renewed sense of purpose. They became advocates within their spheres of influence, ready to challenge stigma, champion mental health awareness, and provide support where it's needed most. The success of this initiative serves as a powerful reminder of what is possible when communities come together to address mental health challenges.

The Sindh Mental Health Authority celebrates initiatives like Noor's workshop as a testament to the progress being made in mental health advocacy. By shedding light on these efforts, we hope to inspire others to prioritize mental health and embrace trauma-informed care. Together, we can work toward a society where compassion and understanding take center stage, ensuring that no one faces mental health challenges alone.

CREATING A MENTAL HEALTH - FRIENDLY WORKPLACE CULTURE

Dr Abdul Razzaque Nohri

The modern workplace is more than just a space for productivity. It is a community where individuals spend a significant portion of their lives. As awareness about mental health grows, organizations are increasingly recognizing the importance of fostering a mental health-friendly workplace culture. Such a culture not only benefits employees but also enhances overall organizational performance, employee retention, and innovation.

The Case for Mental Health in the Workplace

Mental health challenges, ranging from stress and anxiety to depression, have a profound impact on individuals and organizations. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), depression and anxiety cost the global economy approximately \$1 trillion annually due to lost productivity and is forecast to reach \$16 trillion by 2030.

A mental health-friendly workplace reduces these impacts by creating an environment where employees feel supported, valued, and equipped to thrive. Beyond reducing costs, it enhances employee engagement, builds loyalty, and cultivates a positive reputation for the organization.

Core Principles of a Mental Health-Friendly Workplace

1. **Awareness and Education:** Building awareness about mental health is foundational to breaking stigma. Employees and leaders must understand that mental health is as vital as physical health. Educational programs, workshops, and access to credible resources can dispel myths, encourage empathy, and normalize conversations about mental health.
2. **Leadership Commitment:** A mental health-friendly workplace begins at the top. Leaders must actively champion mental health initiatives and model supportive behavior. Their

commitment signals to employees that the organization takes mental well-being seriously.

3. **Open Communication:** Establishing clear, stigma-free channels for communication allows employees to share their mental health concerns without fear of judgment or reprisal. Regular check-ins, feedback mechanisms, and open forums can promote transparency and trust.
4. **Inclusivity and Diversity:** Mental health challenges affect people differently based on their gender, cultural background, and socioeconomic status. A mental health-friendly workplace acknowledges and respects these differences, ensuring that support systems are inclusive and accessible to all.
5. **Work-Life Balance:** Work-life balance is crucial for mental well-being. Encouraging reasonable workloads, flexible scheduling, and time off for mental health needs can prevent burnout and promote long-term productivity.

Strategies for Building a Mental Health-Friendly Workplace

1. **Design a Comprehensive Mental Health Policy:** Develop a formal policy that outlines the organization's commitment to mental health, available resources, and steps for seeking support. The policy should be easily accessible and periodically reviewed for relevance.
2. **Offer Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs):** EAPs provide confidential counseling services and resources for employees dealing with personal or professional challenges. These programs are often the first line of support for employees in distress.

3. **Train Managers and Supervisors:** Equip leaders with the skills to identify signs of mental health struggles, provide initial support, and guide employees toward appropriate resources. Managers should also be trained in maintaining boundaries and promoting team well-being.
4. **Promote Peer Support Networks:** Peer support initiatives allow employees to connect with colleagues who have shared experiences. These networks can be instrumental in providing emotional support and reducing isolation.
5. **Integrate Mental Health into Workplace Design:** Physical work environments influence mental health. Incorporate natural light, quiet spaces, and ergonomic furniture to create a calming and supportive atmosphere. Additionally, virtual workspaces should include measures for maintaining employee well-being, such as regular team interactions and flexible breaks.
6. **Celebrate Mental Health Days:** Acknowledging mental health through designated awareness days or campaigns emphasizes the organization's commitment and provides opportunities for education and engagement.
7. **Measure and Adapt:** Use surveys, feedback sessions, and other metrics to assess the effectiveness of mental health initiatives. Continuous evaluation ensures that programs remain relevant and impactful.

The Benefits of a Mental Health-Friendly Workplace

1. **Improved Employee Productivity:** Employees who feel mentally supported are more focused, motivated, and creative. The organizations with strong mental health programs experience higher levels of employee performance and innovation.
2. **Lower Turnover Rates:** Employees are more likely to stay with organizations that value their well-being. Reduced turnover translates to cost savings in recruitment and training.
3. **Enhanced Reputation:** Organizations with a mental health-friendly culture attract top talent and are viewed favorably by customers, partners, and stakeholders. This positive reputation can serve as a competitive advantage.
4. **Healthier Work Relationships:** A supportive environment fosters trust and collaboration among team members, improving overall workplace dynamics.
5. **Prevention of Burnout:** Addressing mental health proactively helps mitigate burnout, a condition that can lead to chronic stress, reduced engagement, and absenteeism.

While the benefits are clear, implementing a mental health-friendly culture can encounter obstacles. Resistance to change, limited resources, and entrenched stigma are common challenges. Overcoming these requires persistence, strategic planning, and a willingness to learn from both successes and setbacks. Organizations should approach the journey as an evolving process, celebrating progress along the way.

W O R K P L A C E W I T H O U T W A L L S A N D B O U N D A R I E S

**Dr. Syed Ali Wasif, Consultant Psychiatrist Ziauddin University & Psychosocial Center
Clifton, President PAMH**

Over period of time, many traditional concepts have evolved and changed to meet the needs of the digital world. The advent of emotionless emojis, advanced computer technologies, and the emergence of 5G have created a world that often seems callous, where human dignity and emotions are frequently challenged. While these advancements can be exciting and fascinating, they can also appear meaningless, uninteresting, and monotonous.

The global COVID-19 pandemic has further complicated this landscape, causing the world to take a strange and unexpected turn. The pandemic brought about countless deaths and widespread psychological fears and phobias, driven by uncertainty and ambiguity. The fear of infection led to the widespread adoption of remote work, fundamentally altering traditional workplace dynamics and contributing to a global recession and widespread joblessness. Despite lockdowns, a significant segment of the workforce, including frontline health and sanitation workers, remained exposed to the virus, with many losing their lives despite precautions and vaccinations.

The global mental health crisis is overwhelming, with nearly one billion people living with mental health issues. This pervasive problem affects individuals of all ages, backgrounds, and regions, including Pakistan. Addressing this crisis requires a comprehensive approach encompassing awareness, accessibility, and strong support systems. Mental disorders, such as

depression, anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia, affect nearly one in eight people worldwide. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these issues, leading to a significant increase in cases of anxiety, depression, and OCD.

These mental health challenges severely impact individuals' quality of life, affecting their ability to work, maintain relationships, and perform daily activities. The burden of mental disorders extends beyond the individual, affecting families and communities and contributing to substantial economic costs due to loss of productivity, increased healthcare expenses, and social welfare support. It is estimated that the global economy loses trillions of dollars annually due to untreated mental health conditions.

One major barrier to care is the stigma associated with mental health conditions and the judgmental attitudes of society, which prevent many people from seeking help. This issue requires urgent attention. Moreover, there is a significant shortage of mental health professionals and services, particularly in Pakistan, where only a few hundred psychiatrists and psychologists serve a population of over 250 million. Mental health services are primarily concentrated in urban areas, leaving rural populations with limited access to care.

In Pakistan, mental health issues are highly prevalent. A study conducted by the Sindh Mental Health Authority indicates that 42%

of people in the province suffer from anxiety and depression, with 25% experiencing suicidal ideation and thoughts of deliberate self-harm. The risk of substance abuse is also becoming alarming. There is a tremendous need for increased collaboration between the government, NGOs, and the private sector to effectively address the mental health crisis.

Raising awareness and reducing stigma are critical steps in this process. Nationwide campaigns should be launched to educate the public about mental health. Schools and workplaces should promote mental health education to foster a culture of understanding and support. Expanding mental health services to rural and underserved areas through community-based programs and tele psychiatry clinics can help improve access to care. Integrating mental health services into primary healthcare settings can provide holistic care and reduce the burden on specialized services. Additionally, training to primary care providers to recognize and manage common mental health conditions is essential.

The fact that nearly one billion people are living with a mental disorder underscores the urgent need for comprehensive mental health reform globally and in Pakistan. By raising awareness, improving access to care, integrating mental health into primary care, developing robust policies, and engaging communities, we can address the mental health crisis and improve the lives of millions. It is time for decisive action to prioritize mental health and ensure that everyone has the opportunity to live a healthy, fulfilling life.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the global economy suffers an annual loss of approximately US\$1 trillion in

productivity due to depression and anxiety alone. This staggering figure highlights the significant economic burden of mental health issues and underscores the urgent need for comprehensive mental health reform globally, including in Pakistan. Here's an exploration of the economic impact of mental health disorders and the steps that can be taken to mitigate this burden.

The Economic Burden of Depression and Anxiety

The economic impact of depression and anxiety is directly linked to loss of productivity and increased absenteeism, where employees are frequently absent from work due to their condition. Even when workers are present, those with depression and anxiety may struggle to perform at their best, leading to reduced productivity. The economic impact also extends to families and caregivers who may need to take time off work or reduce their working hours to provide care and support, further contributing to the overall economic burden.

Mental health issues can lead to lower workforce participation rates, affecting economic growth and development. Companies facing high levels of mental health-related absenteeism and presenteeism may experience reduced competitiveness and higher operational costs.

Steps to Alleviate the Economic Burden of Mental Health Issues:

Investing in Mental Health Care: Governments and the private sector need to increase funding for mental health services, research, and infrastructure to provide adequate support for those affected. Ensuring mental health services are accessible and affordable, particularly in underserved areas, is crucial.

Promoting Mental Health in the Workplace: Implement employee assistance programs that provide confidential counselling and support for mental health issues. Train managers and HR personnel to recognize signs of mental distress and provide appropriate support and accommodations.

Integrating Mental Health Education:

Incorporate mental health education into school curricula and workplace training programs to foster a culture of understanding and support.

Creating Supportive Policies and Legislation:

Develop and enforce laws that protect the rights of individuals with mental health conditions and ensure they receive adequate care and support. Implement comprehensive national mental health strategies that prioritize mental health as a key component of public health.

The economic impact of depression and anxiety, with an annual loss of approximately US\$1 trillion in productivity, highlights the urgent need for action. Investing in mental health care, promoting mental health in the workplace, raising awareness, integrating mental health into primary care, supporting research, and creating supportive policies are essential steps to mitigate this burden. By addressing the economic and human costs of mental health issues, we can improve the well-being of individuals and the productivity of economies globally, including in Pakistan. It is time to prioritize mental health as a critical component of overall health and economic stability.

Indirect costs arise from long-term effects such as disability payments, increased use of other health services due to comorbid conditions, and the economic burden on

families caring for individuals with mental illness. Families often bear the financial burden of caring for individuals with mental illness, including expenses for treatment, medications, and supportive services. Caregivers may need to reduce their working hours or quit their jobs to provide care, resulting in lost income and economic strain.

Mental illness can lead to social costs such as increased crime rates, homelessness, and decreased social cohesion, which further impact community well-being and economic stability. Children and young adults affected by mental illness may experience educational setbacks, leading to lower academic achievement and reduced future earning potential. Adults may face challenges in obtaining and maintaining employment, resulting in lower socioeconomic status and reduced contributions to the economy.

Governments incur costs related to providing mental health services, implementing policies, and addressing the societal consequences of mental illness. Effective mental health policies and investments can mitigate these costs by promoting early intervention, improving access to care, and supporting economic participation among affected individuals.

To mitigate the economic impact of mental illness in Pakistan, several strategies can be considered:

Investment in Mental Health Services: Increase funding for mental health services, facilities, and workforce training to improve accessibility and quality of care.

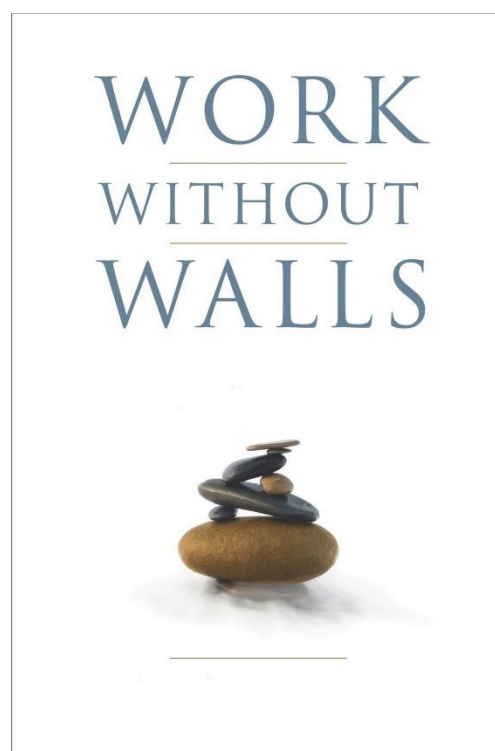
Promoting Workplace Mental Health:

Encourage workplaces to implement mental health programs, provide employee assistance programs, and create supportive work environments.

Awareness Campaigns: Conduct campaigns to raise awareness about mental health issues, reduce stigma, and promote early intervention and treatment-seeking behaviors.

Policy Development: Develop and enforce policies that protect the rights of individuals with mental illness, ensure equitable access to treatment, and promote inclusive workplaces.

By addressing the mental health needs of working-age adults through comprehensive strategies, Pakistan can foster a healthier and more productive workforce, leading to improved overall well-being and economic resilience.



INTERNATIONAL

THE NEWS

First genetic study launched to uncover suicide causes in Thar region

By M. Waqar Bhatti | November 08, 2024



Top Officials pose for a group photo after signing an MOU at University of Karachi on November 7, 2024. —

The study project aims to understand the genetic, psychological and environmental factors contributing to the suicides in rural Sindh, where their cases have increased alarmingly. In this regard a memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed on Thursday by the Sindh Mental Health Authority (SMHA), the Department of Genetics at the University of Karachi, and the Department of Psychiatry at the Dow University of Health Sciences (DUHS).

The MoU signing ceremony held in the KU Vice Chancellor Conference Room was attended by KU VC Prof Dr Khalid Mahmood Iraqi, SMHA Chairman Senator Dr Karim Ahmed Khawaja, DUHS Registrar Dr Ashar Afaq, and several other prominent faculty and health officials.

Dr Iraqi emphasised that this pioneering research has the potential to uncover genetic predispositions to mental health conditions like depression and substance abuse that might increase susceptibility to suicide.

Dr Khawaja expressed the urgency for the project, noting that the SMHA has documented a rise in suicide cases in Tharparkar, Jamshoro, Dadu and other districts, with the trend raising concerns over mental health in these communities.

“This initiative is a milestone for Pakistan. Suicide is a complex issue, and understanding its genetic components will allow us to develop preventive measures to support affected communities.”

Under the agreement, KU’s Department of Genetics will conduct DNA analyses and examine biological samples to identify genetic markers linked to mental health issues, the SMHA will assess mental health challenges within families, and the DUHS’s Department of Psychiatry will facilitate case identification and data collection from the affected communities.

The three institutions will collaborate on a comprehensive survey and questionnaire, reaching out to families impacted by suicide in order to gather genetic samples and data. The significance of the project was highlighted by KU’s project coordinator and psychology department faculty member, Prof Dr Farah Iqbal, who pointed out the broad impact of suicide on families and communities, stressing that this research can help guide future interventions and mental health services.

The MoU was formally signed by Dr Khawaja, Dr Afaq and Dr Ansari, setting the foundation for a study poised to make substantial contributions to mental health research and preventive care in the country.



لاڑکانہ: سندھ میٹل ہلتھ اتھارٹی کی جانب سے ڈاکٹروں اور طبی عملے کے لیے ذہنی امراض اور ان کے علاج کے لیے ماہر ڈاکٹر لیچر دے رہے ہیں

دماغی امراض کی جلد تشخیص ضروری ہے، ڈاکٹر بدرالدین

صوبے میں اس وقت سائیکالوسٹ ڈاکٹر کی کمی ہے، لاڑکانہ میں تربیتی پروگرام سے خطاب

لاڑکانہ (نمائندہ کلیم) سندھ میٹل ہلتھ اتھارٹی نے لاڑکانہ کے ایک مقامی ہوٹل میں ڈاکٹروں اور طبی عملے کے لیے ذہنی امراض اور ان کے علاج کے لیے تین روزہ تربیتی پروگرام شروع کر دیا ہے۔ پروگرام کے پہلے دن دماغی امراض کے ماہر ڈاکٹر پروفیسر ڈاکٹر بدرالدین جو نیچو، پروفیسر ڈاکٹر رحمت علی وگن، اسسٹنٹ پروفیسر ڈاکٹر انوپ کمار اور ڈاکٹر دولت رام نے دماغی صحت پر لیچر دیا، اس موقع پر چیئرمین سندھ میٹل ہلتھ اتھارٹی ڈاکٹر کریم خواجہ نے کہا کہ تربیتی ورکشاپ کا مقصد ڈاکٹروں اور طبی عملے کو دماغی امراض کے بارے میں تازہ ترین معلومات فراہم کرنا ہے، انہوں نے کہا کہ

باقی صفحہ 02 بقیہ نمبر 35

35 بقیہ نمبر

ورکشاپ میں لاڑکانہ ڈویژن کے پانچ اضلاع کے تقریباً 500 ڈاکٹر اور لیڈی ہیلتھ سپر وائزرز کو ذہنی صحت کے معاملے سے تہیہ دی جائے گی۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ لوگوں کے دماغی امراض کی جلد تشخیص ضروری ہے، انہوں نے کہا کہ ہم ڈاکٹر اور طبی عملے کے لیے 25 اضلاع میں بیماری کا جلد پتہ لگانے، مریضوں کے علاج اور ان کی دیکھ بھال کے لیے تربیتی ورکشاپوں کا انعقاد کیا ہے، سندھ میٹل ہلتھ اتھارٹی کے سیکریٹری ڈاکٹر سید ظفر مہدی نے کہا کہ سندھ میں سائیکالوسٹ ڈاکٹر کی کمی ہے۔ تربیتی جرنل ڈاکٹر، پی پی ایچ آئی ڈاکٹر اور لیڈی ہیلتھ سپر وائزرز کو دماغی امراض کے بارے میں معلومات فراہم کرے گی، پروگرام میں لاڑکانہ کے ڈی ایچ او ڈاکٹر شریک ایو اور ضلع جگر جھادکوٹ کے ڈی ایچ او ڈاکٹر شہناز جوتی نے بھی خطاب کیا۔ تربیتی پروگرام کے پہلے روز لاڑکانہ اور جگر جھادکوٹ اضلاع کے ڈاکٹر، لیڈی ہیلتھ سپر وائزرز اور لیڈی ہیلتھ ورکرز نے شرکت کی، دوسرے دن جگر پور اور جیک آباد جگہ آخری روز ضلع کشور کوٹ کے ڈاکٹر، پی پی ایچ آئی سٹاف اور لیڈی ہیلتھ سپر وائزرز کو تربیت دی جائے گی۔



SMHA holds a three-day mental health training for medical professionals

By Saleem Soomro

LARKANA: The Sindh Mental Health Authority (SMHA) has successfully commenced a three-day mental health training session aimed at enhancing the skills of healthcare professionals. Participants include members from the Health Department, PPHI, family physicians, and Lady Health Supervisors from five districts: Larkana, Qambar Shahdadkot, Shikarpur, Jacobabad, and Kandhkot. The training is being held at Sambara Inn Hotel, Larkana. The main objective of the SMHA is to increase mental health awareness among health-care providers and equip them with essential training to improve their capacity to identify, manage, and refer psychiatric patients to

specialists. So far, SMHA has conducted mental health training for general practitioners across 25 districts in Sindh, with three additional districts scheduled for completion in the coming days. The remaining districts will be covered by the end of this year. Prominent psychiatrists, including Prof. Dr. Badruddin Junejo, Prof. Dr. Rehmat Ali Wagan, and Associate Prof. Dr. Anoop Kumar Jusija, delivered lectures and presentations to the attendees. Speaking at the workshop, SMHA Chairman Dr. Karim Khawaja emphasized the authority's efforts to advance mental health support in Larkana Division in collaboration with the Health Department. He highlighted that this workshop aims to provide specialized training to approx-

imately 500 doctors and Lady Health Supervisors across five districts, empowering them to diagnose mental health issues accurately and contribute to data collection. District Health Officer Larkana, Dr. Shoukat Abro, extended a warm welcome to all participants and commended the SMHA's initiatives. Dr. Shahnawaz Jatoti, District Health Officer of Qambar-Shahdadkot, expressed his gratitude and offered a vote of thanks. During the session, SMHA Secretary Dr. Syed Zafar Mehdi addressed the shortage of psychiatrists in Sindh, emphasizing that the training equips general doctors, PPHI doctors, and Lady Health Supervisors with essential knowledge and procedures for mental health assessments and referrals.

ذہنی امراض اور ان کے علاج کیلئے تین روزہ تربیتی پروگرام کا آغاز

لاڑکانہ (نمائندہ جہان پاکستان) سندھ میٹل ہلتھ اتھارٹی نے لاڑکانہ کے ایک مقامی ہوٹل میں ڈاکٹروں اور طبی عملے کے لیے ذہنی امراض اور ان کے علاج کے لیے تین روزہ تربیتی پروگرام شروع کر دیا ہے۔ پروگرام کے پہلے دن دماغی امراض کے ماہر ڈاکٹر پروفیسر ڈاکٹر بدرالدین جو نیچو، پروفیسر ڈاکٹر رحمت علی وگن، اسسٹنٹ پروفیسر ڈاکٹر انوپ کمار اور ڈاکٹر دولت رام نے دماغی صحت پر لیچر دیا، اس موقع پر چیئرمین سندھ میٹل ہلتھ اتھارٹی ڈاکٹر کریم خواجہ نے کہا کہ تربیتی ورکشاپ کا مقصد ڈاکٹروں اور طبی عملے کو دماغی امراض کے بارے میں تازہ ترین معلومات فراہم کرنا ہے۔

INTERNATIONAL
THE NEWS

Survey reveals stigma barrier to mental health care in Tharparkar

By M. Waqar Bhatti | December 12, 2024



Women walk alongside the road in Mithi, the capital of Tharparkar district, Sindh. —

A groundbreaking survey on mental health in Tharparkar has revealed alarming levels of stigma, misconceptions and barriers to accessing care with 70 per cent of participants believing mental illnesses are contagious and 82 per cent citing family stigma as a major obstacle to seeking help.

The study conducted under the Sindh Mental Health Authority (SMHA) in collaboration with key partners highlights critical issues affecting mental health awareness and care in one of Pakistan's most underserved regions.

The study, titled 'Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) Among the Residents of Tharparkar', surveyed 5,378 individuals across seven talukas, including Mithi, Islamkot and Diplo. Findings showed that while over half of the participants (52 per cent) were aware of mental health issues, misconceptions persisted, with 35 per cent attributing mental illness to sins and 28 per cent to supernatural causes.

Financial constraints (28 per cent), lack of awareness about available services (16 per cent), and confidentiality concerns (76 per cent) were highlighted as major hurdles to accessing care. While 60 per cent of the respondents believed in medical treatments for mental illness, only 36 per cent felt recovery was possible, underscoring the need for awareness campaigns to address these perceptions.

Stigma within families and communities emerged as a pressing issue, with 65 per cent expressing shame about having a mentally ill relative and 87 per cent observing community demoralisation of mental health patients.

These attitudes prevent many from seeking timely care or supporting loved ones in need. Tharparkar's mental health crisis is further exacerbated by one of the highest suicide rates in Sindh. Economic hardships, domestic violence and cultural pressures are among the root causes.

Reports from recent years have linked mass suicides to extreme poverty, with entire families resorting to drastic measures due to insurmountable financial stress. Teenage despair, social isolation and forced marriages are additional factors contributing to the alarming numbers.

Speaking at the launch ceremony, which was presided over by Vice Chancellor of the Dow University of Health Sciences (DUHS) Prof Saeed Quraishy, SMHA Chairman Dr Karim Ahmed Khawaja emphasised the need for collaborative efforts, stating that addressing mental health in Tharparkar required a multi-faceted approach involving government, NGOs and community leaders.

Social Message

After Covid, patients are not properly recovering from Covid symptoms, so with the consultation of the Doctors, visit this Government Institute for Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation.

POST COVID REHABILITATION- A ROAD TO RECOVERY

Covid 19 virus affect the lungs

→

Lasting Symptoms of Covid 19



Healthy Lungs



Covid 19 affected Lungs



Breathlessness



Cough



Tiredness

Physiotherapy is the key to recovery from Covid 19. Exercise plays an important role during recovery and your Physiotherapists can guide you.

You are Eligible for Post Covid Rehabilitation

If you have tested positive for Covid 19
If you have been Hospitalized
Discharged from hospital
If you have been isolated at Home/Institution

We Physiotherapists can help you at our Rehabilitation OPD to:

- * Reduce Breathlessness
- * Reduce Stress
- * Reduce Cough
- * Improve Fitness
- * Improve Muscle Strength
- * Improve Activities of Daily Living

Post Covid Rehabilitation Includes

1. Breathing Re- Training
2. Lung Expansion Exercises
3. Fitness Training



Address: Sindh Institute of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Chand Bibi Road, near Dr. Ruth K.M Pfau, Civil Hospital, Karachi.

SUICIDE PREVENTION HELPLINE SETUP BY SINDH MENTAL HEALTH AUTHORITY

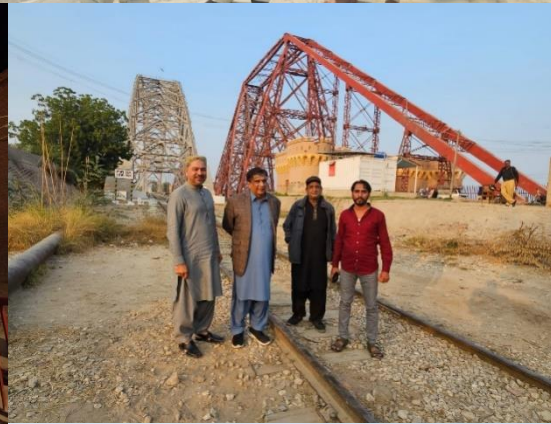
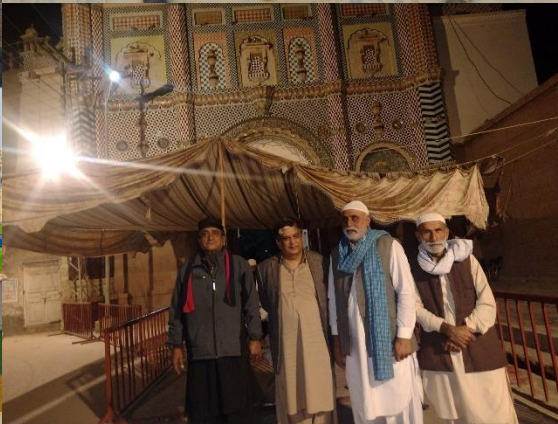
Sindh Mental Health Authority created three Mental Health Helplines (021-111 117 642/ 022-111 117 642) at main cities of province of Sindh. The public of Sindh can call from morning 9:00 am to 5:00 p.m. SMHA to run these helpline with the following stakeholders/ partners.

- Helpline Number (022-111 117 642) installed at Sir Cowasji Jehangir Institute of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences, Hyderabad with the partners', i.e Liaquat University of Medical & Health Sciences (LUMHS), Jamshoro, Sindh University (Department of Psychology) & Charter for Compassion, Pakistan to run the helpline.
- Helpline Number (021 111 117 642) installed at Psychiatry Ward, Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Center (JPMC), Karachi with the partners, 'i.e. Department of Psychology, Karachi University, Institute of Clinical Psychology, Karachi University, & Charter for Compassion, Pakistan.
- Helpline Number (021-9921 5720) installed at Psychiatry Ward, Dow Medical College, Dow University of Health Sciences, Karachi with the partners, 'i.e. Department of Psychology, Karachi University, Institute of Clinical Psychology, Karachi University, & Charter for Compassion, Pakistan to run the helpline.

Sindh Mental Health Authority also created Tele Psychiatry Helpline at District Tharparkar along with Mithi Civil Hospital & Thar Foundation.

	https://smha.sindh.gov.pk/		https://www.facebook.com/smha.gov.9/
	info.smha@sindh.gov.pk		https://twitter.com/SindhMental
	smha.gov.org@gmail.com		Contact No: 021-35308771-4

Highlights



آئيزم سان ٻارن کي بااختيار بنائڻ ۽ پاڪستان حڪومت جون ذميواريون

ڊاڪٽر نوشابا نفيس ابڙو، گائنيڪالوجسٽ
لاڙڪاڻو

5. عوامي آگاهي ۽ مدد:

عوامي آگاهي مهمون: آئيزم بابت آگاهي وڌائڻ، غلط فهميون ختم ڪرڻ ۽ قبوليت ۽ شموليت کي فروغ ڏيڻ لاءِ مهمون شروع ڪرڻ.

ڪٽنبن لاءِ مدد: آئيزم سان متاثر ماڻهن جي ڪٽنبن لاءِ مشوري، آرمڊ خيال، ۽ سپورٽ گروپن تائين رسائي جهڙيون مڪمل سپورٽ خدمتون فراهم ڪرڻ.

راندين ۾ سرگرمي سان حصو وٺڻ جي اهميت

جسماني سرگرمي آئيزم سان متاثر ماڻهن لاءِ ڪيترائي فائدا مهيا ڪري ٿي، جيئن:

جسماني صحت ۾ بهتري: باقاعده مشق دل ۽ رت وهڻ جي صحت بهتر ڪري ٿي، عضلات کي مضبوط ڪري ٿي، ۽ هم آهنگي وڌائي ٿي.

سماجي صلاحيتن ۾ واڌارو: گروهه رانديون ۽ تفريحي سرگرميون سماجي رابطن، رابطي، ۽ گڏيل ڪم جا موقعا فراهم ڪن ٿيون. دٻاءُ ۽ پريشاني ۾ گهٽتائي: جسماني سرگرمي جذبات کي منظم ڪرڻ، پريشاني گهٽائڻ ۽ مجموعي فلاح و بهبود کي بهتر بنائڻ ۾ مددگار ٿي سگهي ٿي.

خود اعتماد ۾ واڌارو: مقصدن جي حاصل ڪرڻ ۽ راندين ۾ حصو وٺڻ اعتماد ۽ ڪاميابي جو احساس وڌائي ٿو.

حڪومت کي آئيزم سان متاثر ماڻهن لاءِ راندين جي پروگرامز تائين پهچ کي فعال طور تي فروغ ڏيڻ گهرجي. اهو هيئن ڪري سگهجي ٿو:

آساني سان پهچندڙ راندين جون سهولتون قائم ڪرڻ: مناسب سامان ۽ تبديلي سان گڏ گڏيل راندين جون سهولتون ٺاهڻ.

راندين جي کوچن ۽ انسٽرڪٽرز جي تربيت: آئيزم سان متاثر ماڻهن سان ڪم ڪرڻ ۽ راندين جون سرگرميون انهن جي ضرورتن مطابق ترتيب ڏيڻ تي تربيت فراهم ڪرڻ.

گڏيل راندين جا ايونٽ منعقد ڪرڻ: گڏيل راندين جا مقابلا ۽ ايونٽ منعقد ڪري شرڪت کي همٿائڻ ۽ سماجي ميل جول کي وڌائڻ.

انهن قدم تي عمل ڪندي، پاڪستان حڪومت آئيزم سان متاثر ماڻهن کي بااختيار بنائڻ ۽ انهن کي مڪمل ۽ خودمختيار زندگي گذارڻ لاءِ مدد مهيا ڪري سگهي ٿي.

آئيزم اسپيڪٽرم ڊس آرڊر (ASD) هڪ نيورو ڊولپمينٽل حالت آهي جيڪا رابطي، سماجي ميل جول ۽ رويي تي اثرانداز ٿئي ٿي. پاڪستان ۾، آئيزم سان متاثر ماڻهن کي اهم مسئلن کي منهن ڏيڻو پوي ٿو، جن ۾ معقول تعليم، صحت جي سهولتن، ۽ روزگار جا موقعا محدود آهن. آئيزم سان ماڻهن کي بااختيار بنائڻ ۽ انهن جي سماجي شموليت کي وڌائڻ لاءِ، پاڪستان حڪومت کي فعال ڪردار ادا ڪرڻ ضروري آهي.

پاڪستان حڪومت جون اهم ذميواريون:

1. شروعاتي سڃاڻپ ۽ مداخلت:

شروعاتي مداخلت مرڪز قائم ڪرڻ: شروعاتي سڃاڻپ ۽ مداخلت لاءِ شهري ۽ پهراڙي وارن علائقن ۾ آساني سان پهچڻ لائق مرڪز قائم ڪرڻ انتهائي اهم آهي. شروعاتي سڃاڻپ بروقت سپورٽ سهولتن لاءِ مددگار ثابت ٿئي ٿي، جيڪا ڊگهي مدت ۾ مثبت نتيجا پيدا ڪري ٿي.

صحت جي ماهرن جي تربيت: صحت جي فراهم ڪندڙن، بشمول ٻارن جي ڊاڪٽرن ۽ بنيادي طبي سنڀال ڪندڙ ڊاڪٽرن کي آئيزم جي نشانين ۽ علامتن کي سڃاڻڻ جي تربيت ڏيڻ.

2. گڏيل تعليم:

استادن جي تربيت: آئيزم بابت ڄاڻ، گڏيل تدريسي طريقا ۽ مددگار ٽيڪنالاجيز جي استعمال تي لازمي تربيت ڏيڻ. وسيلن جي فراهمي: اسڪولن لاءِ گڏيل تعليمي ماحول پيدا ڪرڻ، مددگار ٽيڪنالاجيز، نصاب ۾ تبديليون، ۽ خاص ماهرن جي مقرري لاءِ مناسب وسيلن جي وڃڻ.

3. صحت جي سهولت تائين رسائي:

ضروري علاج فراهم ڪرڻ: ڳالهائڻ جي علاج، پيشه ورانه علاج ۽ رويي جي علاج کي آساني سان ۽ گهٽ قيمت تي دستياب بنائڻ.

جامع صحت نظام قائم ڪرڻ: هڪ مضبوط صحت نظام ٺاهڻ جيڪو آئيزم سان متاثر ماڻهن جي زندگيءَ جي هر مرحلي ۾ انهن جي خاص ضرورتن کي پورا ڪري.

4. صلاحيتن جي ترقي ۽ روزگار:

پيشه ورانه تربيت جا پروگرام: آئيزم سان متاثر ماڻهن جي قابليت ۽ دلچسپين موجب پيشه ورانه تربيت پروگرام قائم ڪرڻ.

گڏيل روزگار کي وڌائڻ: نجی ۽ سرڪاري شعبن کي آئيزم سان متاثر ماڻهن جي ضرورتن مطابق گڏيل ڪم جا هنڌ ٺاهڻ لاءِ همٿائڻ.

شراب نوشي ۽ بيچيني: پاڻ کي نقصان پهچائڻ واري چار کي سمجهڻ

نالو: مسعود احمد نوھري

پيشو: سنڌ يونيورسٽي ۾ سوفٽ ويئر انجنيئرنگ جو شاگرد

شراب ۽ بيچيني جي بيمارين جي وچ ۾ لاڳاپو بيچيني ۽ شراب نوشي اڪثر هڪ ٻئي سان جڙيل هونديون آهن. تحقيق مان خبر پوي ٿي ته بيچيني جي بيمارين ۾ مبتلا ماڻهن کي شراب نوشي جي عادت لڳڻ جا امڪان ٻن کان ٽي ڀيرا وڌيڪ هوندا آهن، ۽ ان جي ابتڙ به ساڳيو معاملو آهي، هن چار مان نڪرڻ جو.

1. پيشه ور مدد حاصل ڪريو

هڪ معالج يا صلاحڪار توهان جي بيچيني جي سببن کي سمجهڻ ۾ مدد ڏئي سگهي ٿو ۽ اهڙا طريقا سيکاري سگهي ٿو، جيڪي شراب کان سواءِ سڪون فراهم ڪن

2. دوائن جا اختيار ڳوليو

ماهر ڊاڪٽر جي صلاح سان مناسب دوائون استعمال ڪرڻ بيچيني کي قابو ڪرڻ ۾ مددگار ثابت ٿي سگهي ٿو

3. ذهني سڪون جا طريقا اپنائو

يوگا، مراقبي ۽ گهري ساهه کڻڻ جهڙيون سرگرميون سڪون جو احساس ڏئي سگهن ٿيون

4. ننڊ کي ترجيح ڏيو

ننڊ جو وقت منظم ڪريو ۽ صحتمند ننڊ جا اصول اپنائو

5. سهائتا وارو نيت ورڪ ٺاهيو

پنهنجن ويجهن ماڻهن سان پنهنجا مسئلا شيئر ڪريو ۽ سپورٽ گروپن جو حصو بڻجو

هڪ صحتمند رستو

بيچيني ۽ شراب جي وچ ۾ لاڳاپو پيچيده آهي، پر ان تي ضابطو آڻڻ ممڪن آهي. صحتمند متبادل اختيار ڪندي توهان شراب جي لت کان آزادي حاصل ڪري سگهو ٿا ۽ مستقل ذهني سڪون ڏانهن اڳتي وڌي سگهو ٿا

بيچيني هڪ عام احساس آهي، جيڪو ڪڏهن هلڪي پریشاني طور ظاهر ٿئي ٿو ۽ ڪڏهن زندگيءَ کي مفلوج ڪندڙ مستقل خوف ۾ تبديل ٿي وڃي ٿو. اڄ جي دور ۾، جتي ڪارڪردگي ۽ ڪمال کي وڌيڪ اهميت ڏني وڃي ٿي، بيچيني سان منهن ڏيڻ وڏو چئلينج بڻجي سگهي ٿو. گهڻا ماڻهو وقتي سڪون لاءِ شراب نوشي جو سهارو وٺندا آهن، پر هي عارضي حل جلد ئي نقصانڪار عادت بڻجي سگهي ٿو. شراب ۽ بيچيني جي وچ ۾ لاڳاپي کي سمجهڻ ضروري آهي ته جيئن هن چار مان نڪري، صحتمند طريقا اختيار ڪري سگهجن

ڇو شراب بظاهر هڪ حل لڳي ٿي؟

شراب جو فوري اثر ان جي پرڪشش هجڻ جو سبب آهي. اها اعصابي نظام کي دٻائي ٿي، جنهن سان دماغي سرگرميون سست ٿي وڃن ٿيون ۽ عارضي سڪون محسوس ٿئي ٿو. پهرين چين سان ئي توهان کي پنهنجي ڪلهن جي چڪاءُ گهٽجڻ لڳي ٿو، دل جي ڌڙڪڻ نرم ٿي وڃي ٿي، ۽ ذهني دٻاءُ گهٽجڻ لڳي ٿو

شراب ڪيئن بيچيني وڌائي ٿي؟

شراب جو اثر عارضي آهي، ۽ بعد ۾ اها بيچيني کي وڌيڪ وڌائي ٿي. جيئن ئي جسم شراب کي ميثابولائيز ڪري ٿو، اعصابي نظام وڌيڪ سرگرم ٿي وڃي ٿو، جنهن سان بيچيني ۾ واڌارو ٿئي ٿو، جنهن کي اڪثر "هينگڙائي" چيو وڃي ٿو

پاڻ کي نقصان پهچائڻ جو چار

هي چار عام طور تي معمولي شروعات سان شروع ٿئي ٿو. هڪ ٽڪائيندڙ ڏينهن کان پوءِ هڪ گلاس شراب سڪون جو ذريعو لڳي ٿو، پر وقت سان گڏ اها ضرورت وڌڻ لڳي ٿي. جيڪو هڪ گلاس سان شروع ٿئي ٿو، اهو ٻه يا ٽي گلاس تائين پهچي وڃي ٿو. آخر ۾، توهان خوشي لاءِ نه پر "نارمل" محسوس ڪرڻ لاءِ شراب پيئڻ لڳو ٿا

ڪاتي، LUMHS، ٿر فائونڊيشن، ۽ SCJIP&BS سان گڏجي، اسان هڪ اهم تحقيقي مطالعي "ٽرپارڪر جي رهواسين ۾ ڄاڻ، روياءُ، ۽ عمل (KAP) کي ڪاميابيءَ سان مڪمل ڪيو آهي.

هيءُ انقلابي مطالعو اسان جي صوبي جي سڀني کان وڌيڪ محروم برادرين لاءِ مستقبل جي مداخلتن کي شڪل ڏيڻ ۾ مدد ڪندو.

سند ذهني صحت جي سنڀال ۾ شاندار اڳڀرائي ڪئي آهي، پاڪستان جو پهريون صوبو بڻجي ويو آهي جنهن ذهني صحت کي بنيادي صحت جي سنڀال ۾ شامل ڪيو آهي. سند مينٽل هيلٿ اٿارٽي ڪاميابيءَ سان سند جي

صحت کاتي جي ڊاڪٽرن، PPHI جي ڊاڪٽرن، ۽ ليڊي هيلٿ ورڪرز کي 30 ضلعن ۾ ذهني صحت جي اسڪريننگ ۽ مئنيجمينٽ جي تربيت ڏني آهي. انهن قدامت جو مقصد نفسيات جي ماهرن ۽ نفسياتي ڊاڪٽرن جي شديد ڪوٽ کي پورو ڪرڻ آهي، جڏهن ته برادري جي سطح تي ذهني صحت جون سهولتون مهيا ڪيون وڃن، جيڪو SMHA جي مشن سان هم آهنگ آهي،

جنهن جو مقصد هر ڪنهن لاءِ آگاهي، رسائي، ۽ مجموعي بهتري کي هٿي ڏيڻ آهي. اسان جي ڪم جا هنڌ پڻ سپورٽ ۽ ترقي جا مرڪز ٿيڻ گهرجن، جتي ذهني صحت کي پيداوار جيتري اهميت ڏني وڃي. هن اشاعت ۾ سنڌ جي ذهني صحت جي ماهرن طرفان لکيل ويچار انگيز مضمون ۽ ماهرانه بصيرتون شامل آهن، جيڪي اسان جي ذهني صحت جي منظرنامي کي شڪل ڏيندڙ موضوعن تي روشني وجهن ٿيون. مون کي اميد آهي ته هي رسالو معنيٰ خيز ڳالهين ۽ عملي قدامت لاءِ حوصلا افزائي ڪندو، جيئن اسان هڪ ذهني طور تي صحتمند سماج ڏانهن اڳڀرائي ڪري سگهون.

سينيٽر ڊاڪٽر ڪريم احمد خواجه
چيئرمين،
سند دماغي صحت اٿارٽي

چيئرمين سنڌ دماغي صحت اٿارٽي پاران ايڊيٽوريل



پيارا پڙهندڙ،

رپورٽ پيش ڪئي. مان پنهنجي جو عاجزي سان شڪر گذار آهيان.

اهي ڪوششون سنڌ حڪومت جي غير متزلزل سهڪار ۽ قيادت کان سواءِ ممڪن نه ٿي سگهن هان. اسان پنهنجي دل جي گهرائين سان سنڌ جي وڏي وزير، وزير صحت، صحت کاتي، سيڪريٽري صحت، پي پي ايڇ آءِ، ۽ سيني ڊسٽرڪٽ هيلٿ آفيسرن (DHOs) جو شڪريو ادا ڪريون ٿا، جيڪي SMHA جي ويزن کي حقيقت بڻائڻ لاءِ پنهنجو قيمتي ڪردار ادا ڪري رهيا آهن. انهن جي عزم سبب سنڌ ۾ ذهني صحت ۾ اهم تبديليون آڻڻ جو سلسلو جاري رکيو آهي.

سنڌ ذهني صحت جي تبديلي آئيندڙ قدامت ۾ اڳواڻي جاري رکي ٿي. سنڌ مينٽل هيلٿ اٿارٽي جي سرپرستي ۾ صحت

مان خوش آهيان ته مون کي سنڌ مينٽل هيلٿ اٿارٽي جي هن اشاعت پيش ڪرڻ جو موقعو مليو، جيڪا ڪم جي جڳهه ۽ ذهني صحت، صحتي امتياز، منشيائت جي استعمال، ۽ تنوع ۽ شموليت جي اهم تعلقن کي ڳولڻ لاءِ وقف آهي.

مون لاءِ اها خوشخبري هئي ته پاڪستان جي صدر محترم آصف علي زرداري صاحب مون کي هدايت ڪئي ته سنڌ جي معزز وزير صحت ڊاڪٽر عذرا فضل پيڇوهو سان صحت ۽ ذهني صحت جي مسئلن بابت ملاقات ڪريان.

پاڪستان جي صدر جي هدايت تي مون 45 منٽن تائين وزير صحت سان ملاقات ڪئي ۽ انهن معاملن تي لکت ۾

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سماجی صلاحیتوں میں اضافہ: ٹیم کی راندی اور تقریحی سرگرمیاں سماجی میل جول، بات چیت، اور ٹیم ورک کے مواقع فراہم کرتی ہیں۔

ان اقدامات پر عمل درآمد کے ذریعے، حکومت پاکستان آئرم کے شکار افراد کو باختیار بنانے میں کلیدی کردار ادا کر سکتی ہے، جس سے وہ مکمل اور خود مختار زندگی گزار سکیں گے۔

پیشانی اور دباؤ میں کمی: جسمانی سرگرمی جذبات کو منظم کرنے، پیشانی کو کم کرنے، اور مجموعی طور پر فلاح و بہبود کو بہتر بنانے میں مددگار ثابت ہو سکتی ہے۔

ڈاکٹر نوشابہ نفیس ابڑو
گائناکالوجسٹ
لاڑکانہ

خود اعتمادی میں اضافہ: مقاصد کے حصول اور راندی سرگرمیوں میں شرکت سے اعتماد اور کامیابی کا احساس بڑھتا ہے۔

حکومت کو آئرم کے شکار افراد کے لیے موزوں راندی پروگرامز تک رسائی کو فعال طور پر فروغ دینا اور سہولت فراہم کرنی چاہیے۔ یہ درج ذیل اقدامات کے ذریعے ممکن ہے:

آسانی سے رسائی کے قابل راندی سہولتیں قائم کرنا: مناسب آلات اور ترامیم کے ساتھ شمولیتی راندی سہولتیں بنانا۔

راندی کوچز اور انسٹرکٹرز کی تربیت: آئرم کے شکار افراد کے ساتھ کام کرنے اور راندی سرگرمیوں کو ان کی ضروریات کے مطابق ڈھالنے پر تربیت فراہم کرنا۔

شمولیتی راندی تقریبات کا انعقاد: شمولیتی راندی مقابلوں اور تقریبات کا انعقاد کر کے شرکت کی حوصلہ افزائی اور کمیونٹی کے احساس کو فروغ دینا۔

اٹزم کے ساتھ افراد کو باختیار بنانا اور حکومت پاکستان کی ذمہ داریاں

3. قابل رسائی صحت کی دیکھ بھال: اٹزم اسپیکٹرم ڈس آرڈر (ASD) ایک نیورو ڈیولپمنٹل حالت ہے جو بات چیت، سماجی تعلقات، اور رویے پر اثر انداز ہوتی ہے۔ پاکستان میں، اٹزم کے شکار افراد کو معیاری تعلیم، صحت کی دیکھ بھال، اور روزگار کے مواقع کی کمی جیسے سنگین چیلنجز کا سامنا کرنا پڑتا ہے۔ اٹزم کے شکار افراد کو باختیار بنانے اور انہیں معاشرے میں شامل کرنے کے لیے، حکومت پاکستان کو فعال کردار ادا کرنا ہوگا۔

4. مہارت کی ترقی اور روزگار:

پیشہ ورانہ تربیت کے پروگرام: اٹزم کے شکار افراد کی صلاحیتوں اور دلچسپیوں کے مطابق پیشہ ورانہ تربیتی پروگرام قائم کرنا۔

شمولیتی روزگار کو فروغ دینا: نجی اور سرکاری شعبے کی تنظیموں کو اٹزم کے شکار افراد کی ضروریات کو پورا کرنے والے شمولیتی کام کی جگہیں بنانے کی ترغیب دینا۔

5. کمیونٹی آگاہی اور مدد:

عوامی آگاہی مہمات: اٹزم کے بارے میں آگاہی بڑھانے، غلط فہمیوں کو ختم کرنے، اور قبولیت اور شمولیت کو فروغ دینے کے لیے وسیع پیمانے پر مہمات کا آغاز کرنا۔

خاندانوں کے لیے مدد: اٹزم کے شکار افراد کے خاندانوں کو مشاورت، آرام دہ دیکھ بھال، اور معاون گروپوں تک رسائی سمیت جامع معاون خدمات فراہم کرنا۔

راندی سرگرمیوں میں فعال شرکت کی اہمیت: جسمانی سرگرمی اٹزم کے شکار افراد کے لیے کئی فوائد فراہم کرتی ہے، جیسے:

بہتر جسمانی صحت: باقاعدہ ورزش دل کی صحت کو بہتر بناتی ہے، پٹھوں کو مضبوط کرتی ہے، اور ہم آہنگی کو بہتر کرتی ہے۔

حکومت پاکستان کی اہم ذمہ داریاں:

1. ابتدائی مداخلت اور تشخیص:

ابتدائی مداخلت کے مراکز قائم کرنا: شہری اور دیہی علاقوں میں آسانی سے رسائی کے مراکز قائم کرنا بہت ضروری ہے تاکہ اٹزم کی جلد تشخیص اور مداخلت ممکن ہو سکے۔ ابتدائی شناخت بروقت معاون خدمات کے لیے اہم ہے، جو طویل مدتی نتائج کو نمایاں طور پر بہتر بناتی ہے۔

صحت کے پیشہ ور افراد کی تربیت: صحت کے فراہم کنندگان، بشمول ماہر اطفال اور بنیادی نگہداشت کے معالجین کو اٹزم کی علامات اور نشانیاں پہچاننے کی تربیت دینا۔

2. شمولیتی تعلیم:

اساتذہ کی تربیت: اساتذہ کے لیے اٹزم کے بارے میں آگاہی، شمولیتی تدریسی طریقے، اور معاون ٹیکنالوجیز کے استعمال پر لازمی تربیتی پروگرام نافذ کرنا۔

وسائل کی تقسیم: اسکولوں کے لیے شمولیتی تعلیمی ماحول پیدا کرنے کے لیے وسائل فراہم کرنا، جس میں معاون ٹیکنالوجیز، نصاب میں تبدیلیاں، اور خصوصی معلمین کی تقرری شامل ہیں۔

چیئرمین ایس ایم ایچ ای ڈاکٹر کریم احمد خواجہ کا ادارہ

پیارے قارئین،

سندھ نے دماغی صحت کی دیکھ بھال میں نمایاں پیش رفت کی ہے ، ذہنی صحت کو بنیادی صحت کی دیکھ بھال میں ضم کرنے والا پاکستان کا پہلا صوبہ بن گیا ہے ۔ سندھ مینٹل ہیلتھ اتھارٹی نے 30 اضلاع میں محکمہ صحت سندھ کے ڈاکٹروں ، پیپلز پرائمری ہیلتھ انیشی ایٹو (پی پی ایچ آئی) کے ڈاکٹروں اور لیڈی ہیلتھ ورکرز کو دماغی صحت کی اسکریننگ اور انتظام میں کامیابی سے تربیت دی ہے ۔ ان کوششوں کا مقصد ذہنی صحت کی خدمات کو سماجی سطح پر قابل رسائی بناتے ہوئے ماہرین نفسیات (ساکائٹرس اور سائیکالوجسٹس) کی شدید کمی کو دور کرنا ہے ، جو ایس ایم ایچ اے کے مشن کے ساتھ ہم آہنگ ہے تاکہ سب کے لئے آگاہی ، رسائی اور مجموعی فلاح و بہبود کو فروغ دیا جاسکے ۔

ہمارے کام کی جگہوں کو بھی حمایت اور ترقی کی پناہ گاہیں بننے کی ضرورت ہے ، جہاں ذہنی صحت کو پیداواری صلاحیت کی طرح اہمیت دی جاتی ہے ۔ اس ایڈیشن میں سندھ کے ذہنی صحت کے پیشہ ور افراد کی جانب سے فراہم کردہ فکر انگیز مضامین اور ماہرین کی بصیرت کو یکجا کیا گیا ہے ، جو ہمارے ذہنی صحت کے منظرنامے کو تشکیل دینے اور متعلقہ موضوعات پہ ہماری سوچ کو وسیع کرنے میں فعال کردار ادا کرتے ہیں ۔ مجھے امید ہے کہ یہ میگزین ذہنی طور پر صحت مند معاشرے کی طرف بامعنی گفتگو اور قابل عمل اقدامات کی ترغیب دے گا ۔

نیک خواہشات ،

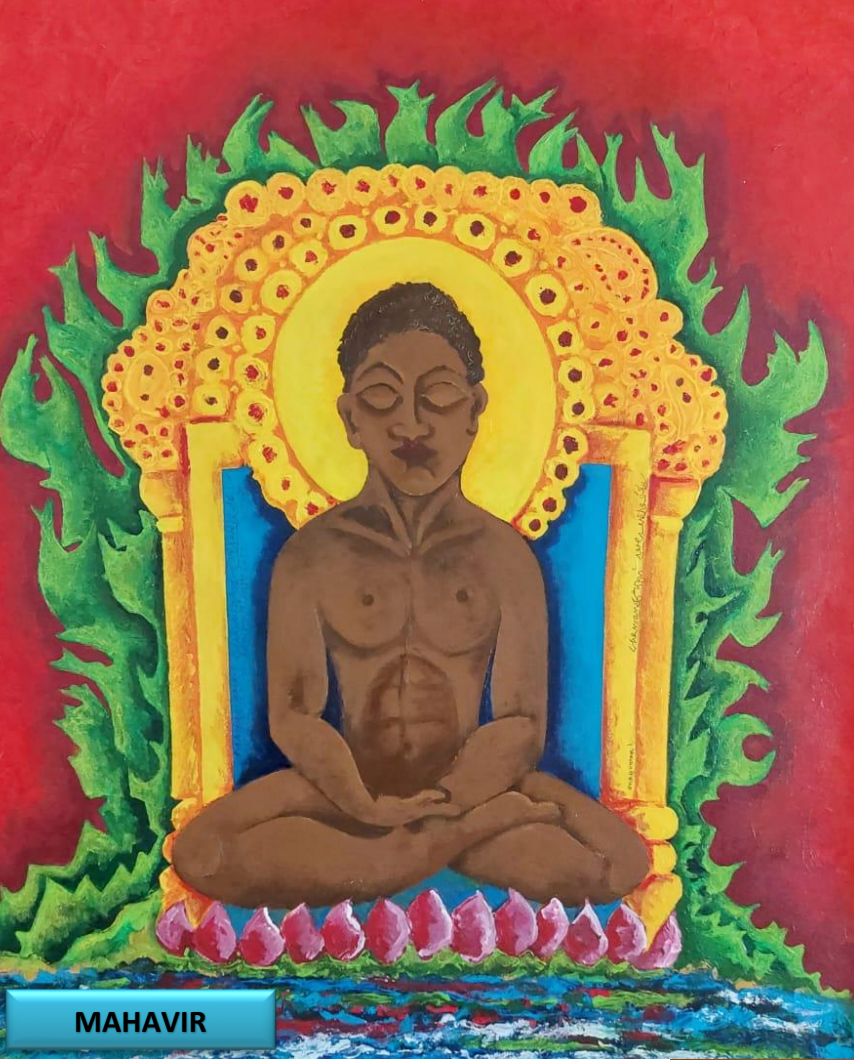
ڈاکٹر کریم احمد خواجہ
سینیئر اور چیئرمین ،
سندھ مینٹل ہیلتھ اتھارٹی

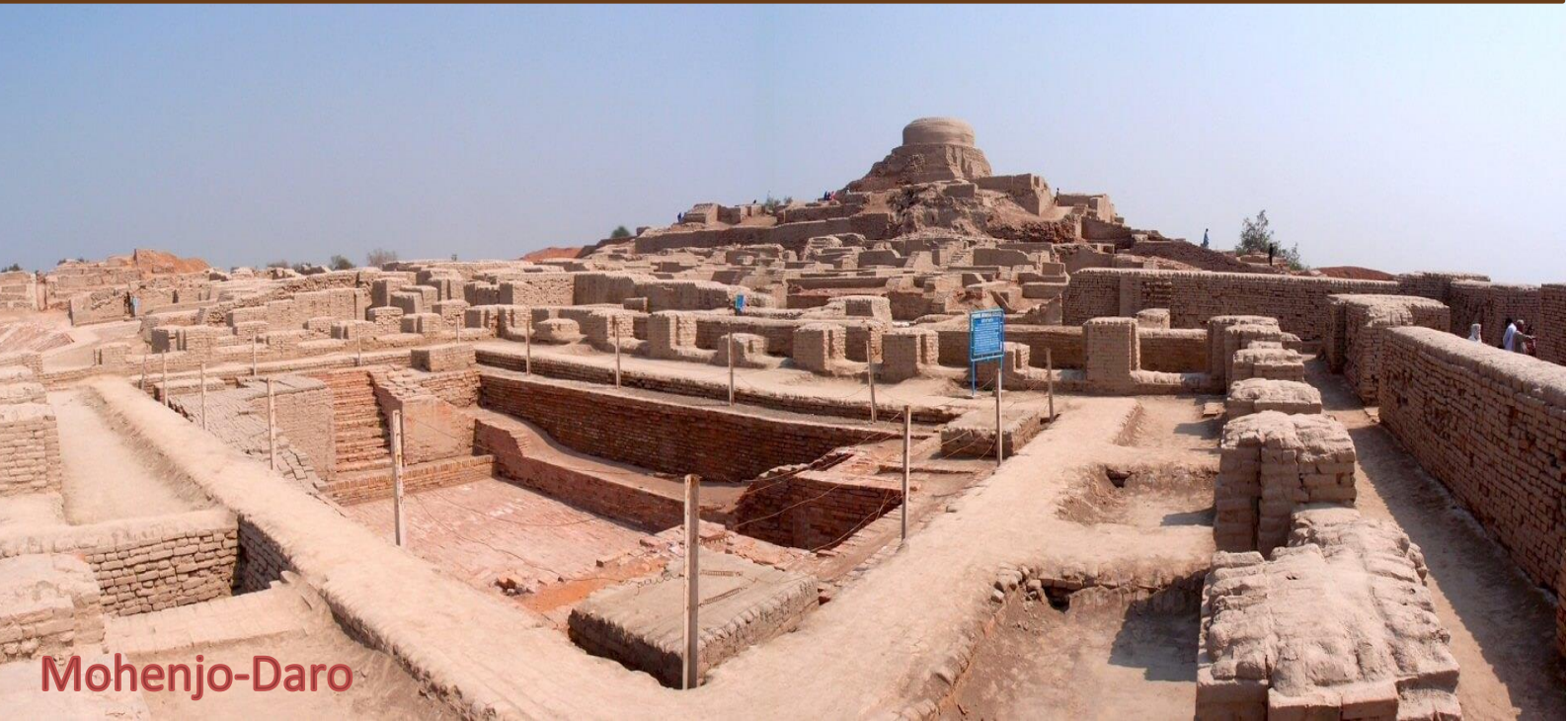
مجھے بہت خوشی ہے کہ میں سندھ مینٹل ہیلتھ اتھارٹی میگزین کا یہ ایڈیشن پیش کر رہا ہوں جو دفاتر میں پیشہ ورانہ زندگی اور ذہنی صحت ، صنفی عدم مساوات ، منشیات کے استعمال ، اور تنوع اور شمولیت کے اہم امتزاج کو دریافت کرنے کے لئے وقف ہے ۔

میرے لیے یہ جاننا اچھی خبر تھی کہ صدر پاکستان محترم آصف علی زرداری صاحب نے مجھے صحت اور دماغی صحت کے مسائل کے حوالے سے عزت مآب وزیر صحت ڈاکٹر عذرا فضل پیچوہو سے ملاقات کرنے کی ہدایت کی ۔

صدر پاکستان کی ہدایت پر میں نے وزیر صحت سے 45 منٹ تک ملاقات کی اور ان مسائل پر بات کی اور تحریری طور پر رپورٹ پیش کی ۔ میں ان دونوں کا تہہ دل سے مشکور ہوں ۔ یہ کوششیں سندھ حکومت کی غیر متزلزل حمایت اور قیادت کے بغیر ممکن نہیں تھیں ۔ ہم وزیراعلیٰ ، وزیر صحت ، محکمہ صحت ، سیکرٹری ہیلتھ ، PPHI ، اور تمام ڈسٹرکٹ ہیلتھ آفیسرز (DHOs) کا SMHA کے وزن کو حقیقت بنانے میں ان کے گراں قدر تعاون کے لیے تہہ دل سے شکریہ ادا کرتے ہیں ۔ ان کی وابستگی سندھ بھر میں ذہنی صحت میں بامعنی تبدیلی لانے کے لیے جاری ہے ۔

سندھ دماغی صحت کے حوالے سے تبدیلی لانے والے اقدامات کے ساتھ آگے بڑھ رہا ہے ۔ سندھ مینٹل ہیلتھ اتھارٹی کے زیر اہتمام اور محکمہ صحت ، ایل یو ایم ایچ ایس ، تھر فاؤنڈیشن اور ایس سی جے آئی پی اینڈ بی ایس کے تعاون سے ہم نے تھرپارکر کے رہائشیوں میں "علم ، رویوں اور طرز عمل (کے اے پی) کے عنوان سے اہم تحقیقی مطالعہ کامیابی سے مکمل کیا ہے ۔ یہ اہم مطالعہ ہمارے صوبے میں سب سے زیادہ پسماندہ برادریوں کے لئے مستقبل کی مداخلتی تدابیر کو تشکیل دینے میں مدد کرے گا ۔





Mohenjo-Daro



Kot Diji Fort

Quarterly Magazine

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Theme: Workplace and Mental Health, Gender Disparity,
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