Role of District Public Health Office: A Public Health Approach

Public Mental Health in Nepal: Training of District Public Health Officers

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Public Health Approach
Overview of public mental health approach advocated by WHO (2001)

- Provide treatment in primary care
- Make psychotropic drugs available
- Give care in the community
- Educate the public
- Involve communities, families and consumers
Public mental health approach WHO (2001)

- Establish national policies, programs and legislation
- Develop human resources
- Link with other sectors
- Monitor community mental health
- Support more research
Public Health Approach to Mental Health:

• Population Focus
• Includes Promotion and Prevention
• Addresses Determinants of Health
• Process/Action Steps
• Resource-efficient
• High impact
The Public Health Approach: Process

• Three core functions
• Ten essential elements/services
Roles of DPHOs
DPHO’s Three Roles at Three Levels

1. Ensure adequate individual-level services: manage/organize treatment, care, and rehabilitation services
   • Arrange in-service training of general health workers from district hospital, PHCs, HPs on mental health
   • Arrange for training of mid-level community psychosocial workers
   • Orient FCHVs on mental health issues and their responsibilities (identify, refer, report)
   • Organize monthly outreach program with nearest mental health team
DPHO’s Role contd.

2. Provide population services: campaigns, awareness programs, screening programs

• Conduct at least one promotive and one preventive activity per year
3. Take intersectoral action: DPHOs acts as stewards of mental health sector; should take a leadership role in coordinating multisectoral collaborations, advocacy for improved policy and legislation, and mobilization of resources from private, NGO, governmental (health and non-health) sectors as well as the community

- Develop, strengthen, and sustain self-help organizations for individuals with mental illness and their families/carers
- Make sure livelihood, safe motherhood, and early childhood programs include or prioritize mentally ill and disabled
- In some districts the local department of women and children has allocated space for a psychosocial counseling center
Experiences sharing from districts

• Brainstorming
Remember

• Mental health is more than the absence of mental illness: it is vital to individuals, families and societies
• There is no health without mental health
• Mental health can be enhanced by effective public health interventions

Ref: Promoting Mental Health: Concepts Emerging Evidence Practice, World Health Organization, 2004
Thank You.