



**NEWS
LETTER
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NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMME

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Celebration of World mental Health Day in Lebanon: the re-launching of the national mental health campaign “Depression: Let’s Talk”

In continuation of the World Health Day Campaign that was launched in April 2017 and on the occasion of World Mental Health Day observed on October 10, the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) re-launched its national campaign on Depression “Let’s Talk About It, To get out of it” between September 10 and October 10 2017.

DEPRESSION

- causes fatigue and body exhaustion
- impacts my ability to perform daily tasks
- impacts my eating and sleeping habits
- negatively impacts my relationship with family and friends
- is the cause behind unrealistic negative ideas about myself, my life and my future
- has effective treatments similarly to any other medical condition I might go through

To contact the centers which are affiliated with the Ministry of Public Health network that can help you or for further information, call our hotline:

1214

Or visit our website:
<http://moph.gov.lb/en/Pages/6/553/nmhp>

**DEPRESSION:
Let's talk...**

National Mental Health Campaign 2017

Logos: REPUBLIC OF LEBANON MINISTRY OF PUBLIC HEALTH, World Health Organization, European Union.

The campaign consisted of multiple components:

- TV clip broadcasted on different local TV channels and on social media with posts reaching more than 100,000 views.
- Brochures and Posters disseminated through all private and public hospitals, all Primary Health Care centres in the MoPH network and through Mental Health and Psychosocial Support non-governmental and humanitarian actors. Posters were also disseminated through newsletters, magazines and blogs.
- Guide for conducting awareness sessions with key messages and pre-post tests for organizations who planned to conduct awareness sessions about depression.
- Social media awareness messages shared through the MOPH facebook page throughout the campaign month.
- MoPH hotline activated to respond to inquiries related to the campaign and to mental health services available in Lebanon.
- Talk shows on different Radio and TV stations hosting the MOPH to talk more about depression, the campaign and the available services.

Campaign materials are accessible on the national mental health campaign 2017-NMHP webpage on the MoPH website on the following link:

<http://www.moph.gov.lb/en/Pages/6/553/nmhp>

Persons may have to deal, at any stage of their lives, with difficult emotions such as stress, anxiety, anger, fatigue. Step-By-Step is an electronic guided self-help intervention developed by the MOPH and the World Health organization to help adult persons living in Lebanon learn strategies to cope with such difficult emotions and problems. Step-By-Step consists of a 5 week online course (available in Arabic and English) that can be used on a mobile phone or computer, with the guidance of e-helpers who may offer support in navigating the program through call or messaging.

The pilot phase of the intervention was launched in October 2017 and will extend until April 2018. The content of the intervention underwent three rounds of community testing that took place in the first 3 quarters of 2017 before it was finalized and tailored to respond to the preferences of the users.

Initially, the implementation started through posters and flyers in 9 primary health care centres (PHCCs) then extended to a total of 20 PHCs and to the wider community through social media campaigns, WhatsApp broadcasts, screening movies in PHCs' waiting rooms, and community outreach. Four tablets were placed in 4 PHCCs across different areas in Lebanon to enable persons who do not have access to internet to use them in the centres. E-helpers were recruited and very well trained by the NMHP and WHO teams on the proper service delivery. Focal persons from the PHCs also received a training on how to introduce the intervention and help in the recruitment process.

So far, 93 participants joined the program, 8 of which finished the intervention. Focal persons in the PHCs as well as e-helpers are undergoing regular refresher trainings and weekly supervision by the project coordinator and supervisor.

The next phase after the pilot will be the study of the intervention through a randomized-control trial.

Scaling-up community mental health care in Lebanon: Establishment of a community mental health centre in Rafik Hariri University Hospital

In line with the national mental health strategy for Lebanon 2015-2020, the National Mental Health Programme is working on improving the availability and accessibility to mental health care through developing evidence-based services at all levels of healthcare in line with the WHO service organization pyramid. This will ensure the provision of quality, comprehensive, integrated and responsive mental health and social care services in community-based settings.

In line with this model, multidisciplinary community-based mental health centres are being established as a second level of care after the primary mental health care. Persons with complex mental health conditions will be referred from the primary healthcare centers with integrated mental health services to the community-based multidisciplinary mental health teams for specialized care.

One such Community Mental Health Centre was launched in October 2017 at Rafik Hariri University Hospital (RHUH), Beirut through a collaboration between the RHUH, the MOPH-NMHP, Médecins du Monde and International Committee of the Red Cross.

The Community Mental Health Center is located at the 3rd floor of the Primary Health Care Center of Rafik Hariri University Hospital, Beirut.

The services provided include:

- Psychoeducation
- Mental health case management
- Psychotherapy
- Psychosocial support
- Psychiatric consultations
- Mental health awareness activities
- Home visits.

The team operating in the center is composed of case managers, mental health nurses, psychologists and psychiatrists, and the consultations provided are free of charge for everyone.

The MOPH, in collaboration with various partners, plans to establish at least one community mental health centre in every governorate by 2020.

Promoting quality mental health services that ensure the protection of human rights: The first national assessments of mental health facilities in Lebanon

One of the objectives of the national mental health strategy for Lebanon 2015-2020 is to “Monitor regularly mental health facilities to ensure protection of human, child and women’s rights of persons with mental disorders using quality and rights standards in line with international treaties, conventions signed/ratified by the Government of Lebanon. In 2017, the MOPH, supported by WHO,



established a multi-disciplinary assessment team and built their capacities on how to conduct the assessment of quality and human rights conditions in mental health and social care facilities, in line with the National Mental Health Strategy for Lebanon. The assessment team includes members from mental health professionals, public health professionals, social welfare professionals and service users. Following this step, the MOPH in collaboration with WHO conducted Lebanon’s first pilot implementation of the Quality Right toolkit in 2 general private hospitals with psychiatric in-wards with a capacity of 10 to 20 psychiatric beds. This pilot project consisted of the 5 following phases:

1. Conducting the Adaptation Workshop;
2. Conducting the Refresher Training;
3. Assessing and Rating of the facilities;
4. Drafting the facility-based assessment reports;
5. Designing and finalizing the improvement plan in collaboration with the psychiatry ward management team.

The NMHP is currently drafting the facility assessment reports and will be meeting with the hospitals’ management in the upcoming weeks to present its main findings and design the improvement plan.

For more information about the quality rights toolkit:

http://www.who.int/mental_health/publications/QualityRights_toolkit/en/

Building the capacity of emergency room staff on managing psychiatric emergencies

In line with the national mental health strategy for Lebanon objectives of building the capacity of health professionals on mental health, the NMHP in partnership with WHO launched in 2016 efforts to scale-up capacity-building for emergency room staff on managing psychiatric emergencies.

The first phase included a series of training workshops for ER staff in public and private hospitals across Lebanon. In total, 117 hospitals were trained, with the participation on average of one to two staff members from each ER shift in every hospital.

In a second phase, that extended between September and November 2017, the full ER team of 7 selected key hospitals across Lebanon received the training. Around 113 participants attended the training.

This second phase was preceded by an evaluation of the trainings based on which an additional training section was added aiming at increasing the knowledge of ER staff on various common legal issues.

Additional trainings will take place in 2018 for additional selected hospitals to ensure coverage of all governorates.



06

National MHPSS indicators set to monitor utilisation and some quality components of services provided by humanitarian and non-governmental actors

In line with the 2016 MHPSS TF action plan, a list of national MHPSS indicators were developed and ready to report on to the Ministry of Public Health by all MHPSS actors starting 2018.

MHPSS indicators are a minimum set of indicators to monitor the accessibility to and some quality components of the available MHPSS services provided by non-governmental and humanitarian actors.

The indicators focus on the provision of the main MHPSS activities with follow-up on specific vulnerable populations (persons with suicide risk, persons with psychosis, referral to hospitals...) in addition to staff training and staff care.

The indicators were developed through a participatory process that included local and international stakeholders and experts review.

To view the indicators:

<https://www.moph.gov.lb/en/Pages/0/15215/mentalhealth-psychosocial-support-indicators>

07

Who is Doing What Where and Until When in Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Lebanon: the piloting of an online mapping platform

In line with the MHPSS TF 2017 action plan, the NMHP has initiated the development of an online platform to map Who is Doing What Where and Until When (4Ws) in MHPSS, based on the WHO 4Ws mapping tool adapted to the Lebanese context. The online format of the mapping tool will ensure easy and timely reporting and updating of information, and will facilitate effective referrals of persons in need of care to the nearest service provider.

In November 2017, the data entry section of the platform was piloted and tested with the participation of 5 MHPSS TF actors.

Feedback of these actors was reviewed and incorporated through adjustments and implementation of the applicable suggestions.

The section of the platform related to analysis with a dashboard for data reporting is under development.

The platform will be finalized before mid- 2018.



In line with the Mental Health Strategy for Lebanon and the Mental Health and Psychosocial Support task force 2017 action plan, the MOPH in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) organized two one-day training workshops on “developmental disorders” using the mhGAP guide in September and October 2017.

This training aimed at sensitizing staff working in Child Protection sector on identifying and referring children of developmental disorders using the mhGAP. It is based on an identified need by protection and mental health actors.

In total 34 persons from 19 non-governmental and humanitarian organisations attended. The workshop included interactive presentations, practical group exercises, role plays, case studies, etc.

In addition, and to assist the staff in diagnosing and providing pharmacotherapy and psychoeducation, WHO and MOPH developed job aids and brochures. The job aids are pocket-size booklets, based on the mhGAP (1.0 and 2.0), where each module is summarized into assessment and management. These brochures provide lay information on the symptoms, origins, treatment options, self-care techniques, and the importance of visiting a health care provider. Participants were also provided with these brochures illustrating Developmental Disorders module.

Participants filled an evaluation form (Likert scale) to provide feedback on what was most useful and how to improve. The majority of participants rated the overall training workshop as excellent (70%) and the others rated it as very good (30%). All participants found that the training experience is useful to their work (100%) (72% strongly agreed, and 28% agreed). The majority of them (95%) also found that the training objectives were met. In addition, almost all participants are interested in attending a follow-up and more advanced workshop on the same topics (97.5%).

In line with the Mental Health Strategy for Lebanon and the MHPSS Task force 2017 action plan, and as part of capacity building of mental health professionals in Lebanon on evidence based therapies, EMDR Lebanon Association with the support of the National Mental Health Programme, funded by Trauma Aid Germany & Terre Des Hommes Germany, held the Basic EMDR Therapy Training Course – Part 1. The 5-days' workshop took place from Oct 14-18, 2017 and marked the beginning of training therapists on the evidence-based approach to treating post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

A total of 31 experienced psychotherapists participated in the workshop. 50 percent of these therapists work with NGOs & INGOs and UN agencies that provide psychosocial support to displaced and vulnerable population, and the other half work in the private sector, such as, universities, hospitals & private clinics.

Parallel to the training of therapists, 4 Lebanon-based Certified EMDR Therapists started their series of training to become Approved EMDR Consultants. During the workshop, the Consultants-in-Training were able to put their skills into practice and learn more about the effective ways to supervise the newly trained EMDR therapists. In addition, 5 Approved EMDR Consultants (four from Palestine & one from Lebanon) started their training to become Accredited EMDR Trainers.

All the trainings are conducted by two internationally accredited EMDR Trainers.

The Basic EMDR Therapy Training Course – Part 1 will be followed up by a study to track patient outcomes with an aim to assess the effectiveness of EMDR on persons living in Lebanon.

The Basic EMDR Therapy Training Course – Part 2 will be a 5-days workshop and will take place in May 2018.

Ensuring an effective, coordinated and focused response to the MHPSS needs of persons living in Lebanon affected by the Syrian crisis: developing the annual action plan for 2018 for the MHPSS Task Force

The MHPSS Task force (TF) in Lebanon is a coordination mechanism, chaired by the MOPH and co-chaired by WHO and UNICEF, with the mission of ensuring an effective coordinated and focused inter-agency response to the MHPSS needs of persons living in Lebanon, with a special focus on persons affected by the Syrian crisis. In line with this mission, and with the national mental health strategy for Lebanon 2015-2020, an annual action plan is developed for the TF to focus its work on addressing the identified gaps and priorities in the MHPSS response.

The development process of the action plan was launched with an online survey to identify the main gaps and challenges in MHPSS work from MHPSS actors' perspective. The data received was analysed and discussed in consultation meetings of the task force in all regions. This data fed into the situation analysis which was complemented with the results of the Vulnerability Assessment Survey of 2017. This facilitated the identification of priorities to be address in the action plan for 2018.

The 2018 action plan with the below priorities was integrated in the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2018, Health sector section:

- Increasing availability of specialized community mental health services across all governorates, particularly in highly under-served areas
- Establishing public psychiatric inpatient wards in North and/or South and/or Bekaa governorates
- Piloting a psychiatric emergency response mechanism
- Conducting capacity-building interventions for staff working in Protection field on developmental disorders and severe mental disorders in line with mhGAP and for Frontliners on (Crisis management and Psychological First Aid)
- Developing Standard Operating Procedures for referrals between the different levels of mental health care
- Conducting a systematic evaluation and needs assessment of the MHPSS response
- Develop guidelines/tools for Monitoring and evaluation of MHPSS programmes
- Quality monitoring of the services by the National Mental Health Programme including the development of guidelines/tools for MHPSS Programmes
- Developing and implementing staff care interventions



Local and international events participation

a) Presenting the Lebanon experience in the mhGAP Forum 2017

The mhGAP Forum is an annual event organized by the World Health Organization (WHO) around World Mental Health Day to give the opportunity for stakeholders to discuss a variety of themes, all related to the implementation of WHO's Mental Health Action Plan 2013-2020, adopted by the World Health Assembly in May 2013. This year's mhGAP Forum focused around the theme of "Mental Health capacity building within countries" and was attended by a large (255) and diverse group of stakeholders from Member States, Ambassadors, UN agencies and civil society organization, including those representing mental health service users.



The National Mental Health Programme of Lebanon participated in the forum and was invited to speak and share its experience in implementing a mental health system reform in Lebanon on three different panels in the two-day event.

On the panel around "mhGAP implementation", the NMHP shared the Lebanon experience of implementing the mhGAP programme as part of the effort to integrate mental health into primary health care.

On a second panel around "mental health campaigns", the NMHP was invited to share successes and lessons learned from the National mental health campaign 2017 that was held around the theme of "Depression: Let's Talk about it to get out of it".



On a third panel related to "self-help interventions (IT-assisted and otherwise)", the NMHP was invited to share experiences with developing and preparing for the piloting of the "Step-by-step" e-guided self-help intervention for mental health.

b) Participating in the IASC Reference Group on MHPSS in emergencies annual meeting

The NMHP participated in the IASC Reference Group on MHPSS in emergencies annual meeting in Geneva on October 4-6, as the chair of the MHPSS coordination mechanism in Lebanon. The IASC MHPSS Reference Group aims to support the implementation of the Inter-Agency standing Committee Guidelines on MHPSS in Emergency Settings and to promote best practices in MHPSS.

The NMHP presented updates on the MHPSS task force in Lebanon and the work it has been doing in line with the annual action plan developed and shared experience and lessons learned in coordination and response.

c) Presenting the case of Lebanon in the WHO Global conference on NCDs



Lebanon was selected as a model and success story on how to build back better after humanitarian emergencies for the work it is doing to reform the national mental health system. The head of the National Mental Health Programme was invited to speak about this model in the “WHO Global Conference on Noncommunicable diseases and mental health: Enhancing policy coherence between different spheres of policy making that have a bearing on attaining SDG target 3.4 by 2030” held in Montevideo, Uruguay on 18-20 October 2017.

d) Workshop on Psychosocial Support organized by the Agence Francaise du Development
With the support of the NMHP, AFD organized a workshop on the “Psychosocial response to vulnerable population’s needs in Lebanon: Managing the transition from a humanitarian to a development approach”.

The workshop’s objectives were, through sharing of experiences and perspectives between Ministries, NGOs and donors, to identify major issues for future psychosocial programs, and to reach shared conclusions to sketch ways of improvement.

The panels featured speakers from the Lebanese Ministry of Social Affairs, the NMHP at MoPH, local and international NGOs operating in Lebanon or in other countries of the region.

All NMHP newsletters are accessible on the NMHP webpage on the MoPH website on the following link:

<http://www.moph.gov.lb/en/Pages/6/553/the-national-mental-health-program>

Contact

mentalhealth@moph.gov.lb

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