



List of Psychotropic and Neurological Medications
Recommended by the National Mental Health Programme
For Prescription in Humanitarian Setting
June 2016

Since the start of the Syrian crisis, local and international non-governmental organizations have initiated specialized mental health services targeting displaced Syrians, Palestinian refugees and vulnerable Lebanese, using different lists of psychotropic and neurological medications, some of these being costly with no reported additional benefits.

This has led to challenges in maintaining a continuum of care for patients when moving between the different levels of care (non-governmental organizations with specialized mental health services, primary healthcare centers and hospitals). The need to rationalize the medication list, especially in the absence of a national list for psychotropic and neurological medications at specialized level, was reported to the mental health and psychosocial support task force that is led by the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH).

Hence,

After reviewing the medication lists shared by several non-governmental organizations providing specialized mental health services to displaced Syrians, Palestinian refugees and vulnerable Lebanese,

And after taking into consideration the World Health Organization's essential list of medications and the need to have the following 5 categories of psychotropic and neurological medications included in the list: 1. Antipsychotics, 2. Anxiolytics, 3. Antidepressants, 4. Mood stabilizers, and 5. Antiepileptic drugs,

And after including the essential psychotropic and neurological medications for primary care from the MOPH list of essential medications for chronic diseases¹ made widely available in Lebanon via MOPH/YMCA programme to around 435 primary healthcare centers and dispensaries,

And after taking into consideration the available medications in Lebanon as listed in the national drug index², the need to have a sustainable supply of psychotropic and neurological medications for all populations residing in Lebanon, the need for public health relevance, evidence of efficacy, safety and comparative cost-effectiveness, and the need for continuum of care,

And after taking into consideration that the mental health services are currently being integrating into the primary healthcare centers using mental health Gap Action Programme – Intervention Guide (mhGAP-IG),

And after the review by stakeholders, local and international experts,

And in line with the National Mental Health and Substance Use Strategy for Lebanon 2015-2020³,

The National Mental Health Programme recommends that the prescription of psychotropic and neurological medications in the humanitarian setting especially at the specialized healthcare level is restricted to the following list:

¹ Ministry of Public Health of Lebanon. 2014. Chronic Disease Medications Provided by MOPH in Collaboration with YMCA, available at <http://www.moph.gov.lb/userfiles/files/HealthCareSystem/PHC/YMCADrugs.pdf>

² Ministry of Public Health of Lebanon. 2015. National Drug index, fifth edition, available at <http://www.moph.gov.lb/userfiles/files/HealthCareSystem/Pharmaceuticals/LNDI/LNDI-2015.pdf>

³ Ministry of Public Health. 2015. Mental Health and Substance Use- Prevention, Promotion, and Treatment- Situation Analysis and Strategy for Lebanon 2015-2020. Beirut: Lebanon, available at <http://www.moph.gov.lb/userfiles/files/Programs%26Projects/MentalHealthProgram/MentalHealthStrategy-Eng%20-2015.pdf>



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Class	Medication ¹ (Molecular Name)	Form and Dosage	Recommended Line of Treatment	Age Category
Antidepressants	Amitriptyline*	Tablet 25 mg	First line ²	Adults
	Fluoxetine* ³	Tablet 20 mg	First line	All ages
	Sertraline*	Tablet 50 mg	First line	Adults
	Clomipramine	Tablet 75 mg	Mainly used as second line for obsessive compulsive disorder	Adults
Antipsychotics	Chlorpromazine*	Tablet 100 mg	First line for adults Second line for pediatrics ⁴	All ages
	Haloperidol*	Tablet 5 mg	First line	All ages
	Risperidone	Tablet 4 mg	Second line for adults First line for pediatrics	All ages
	Risperidone	Syrup 1mg/ml	First line	Pediatrics
	Zuclopenthixol decanoate	Injectable solution 200 mg/mL	Second line	Adults
	Clozapine ⁵	Tablet 100 mg	Third line	All ages
Anxiolytics	Diazepam ⁶	Tablet 5 mg	First line	Adults
Antiepileptic	Phenytoin*	Tablet 100 mg	First line	All ages
	Phenobarbital	Tablet 100 mg	First line	All ages
	Levetiracetam	Tablet 500 mg	Third line	All ages
	Levetiracetam	Syrup 100mg/ml	Third line	Pediatrics
	Clonazepam ⁶	Tablet 2 mg	Add-on medication	All ages

¹ The national guidelines for prescriptions of these medications will follow

² Amitriptyline is not a first line of treatment for elderly (≥ 65 years) and medically ill persons, as well as persons with imminent risk of suicide

³ Fluoxetine is the only antidepressant that can be prescribed for adolescents aged 12 years and older when psychosocial interventions prove ineffective; it is not to be prescribed for children below 12 years of age under any circumstance

⁴ Pediatrics defined as persons aged less than 18 years

⁵ For Clozapine, close monitoring of absolute neutrophil count (ANC) is needed (ANC should be ≥ 1500/μL)

⁶ Diazepam and Clonazepam are strictly controlled by the Lebanese drug law # 673/1998 and their dispensing requires the maintenance of specific registries available at the level of pharmacies, and usually not available at the level of primary healthcare centers



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Antiepileptic / Mood stabilizers	Carbamazepine*	Tablet 200 mg	First line	All ages
	Carbamazepine *	Tablet 400 mg	First line	All ages
	Carbamazepine	Syrup 100mg/5ml	First line	Pediatrics
	Sodium Valproate*	Tablet 500 mg	First line	All ages
	Sodium Valproate*	Tablet 500 mg CHRONO	First line	All ages
	Sodium Valproate*	Syrup 200 mg/5 ml	First line	Pediatrics
	Lamotrigine	Tablet 100 mg	Third line	All ages
Mood stabilizer	Lithium	Tablet 400 mg	Third line ⁷	All ages
Antiparkinson/ Treatment of antipsychotic medications side- effects	Carbidopa/ Levodopa*	Tablet 25 mg/250 mg	First line	Adults
	Trihexyphenidyl*	Tablet 5 mg	First line	All ages
	Biperiden	Tablet 4 mg	First line	All ages

* Ministry of Public Health of Lebanon. 2014. Chronic Disease Medications Provided by MOPH in Collaboration with YMCA, available at <http://www.moph.gov.lb/userfiles/files/HealthCareSystem/PHC/YMCADrugs.pdf>

⁷ As per the mental health Gap Action Programme – Intervention Guide (mhGAP-IG): “Begin treatment of acute mania with lithium, valproate, carbamazepine or with antipsychotics”. “Lithium may be considered only if clinical and laboratory monitoring are available”. Hence, since lithium has a narrow therapeutic index and since laboratory monitoring at no cost is usually not available for vulnerable populations, it is recommended to start using lithium after other first line of treatments have failed