



A Shared Vision Worldwide: Keeping Our Minds Healthy in the Urban World



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Some background info first...

According to WHO, mental health issues have been on the rise over the years with a surge of 13% in mental health conditions and substance abuse disorders dated to 2017. Although more significance has been given on mental health such as by including it into the UN Sustainable Development Goals, mental health conditions continue to remain as one of the treats faced in the global urban community complicated by personal, environmental and societal factors. Solutions to alleviate such stress and negative emotions in the global community are yet to be explored.

Objectives:

- Analyse the root causes and effects of mental disorders
- Explore global solutions based on measures implemented at present

Materials & Methods:

- News reports
- WHO statistics
- Government statements
- Research from health organization and institutions

The world in a glance:



1 in 4 people is affected by mental health problems at least once in their life



Among them, 2 out of 3 do not seek help

3m

3 million people suffer from depression worldwide

1m

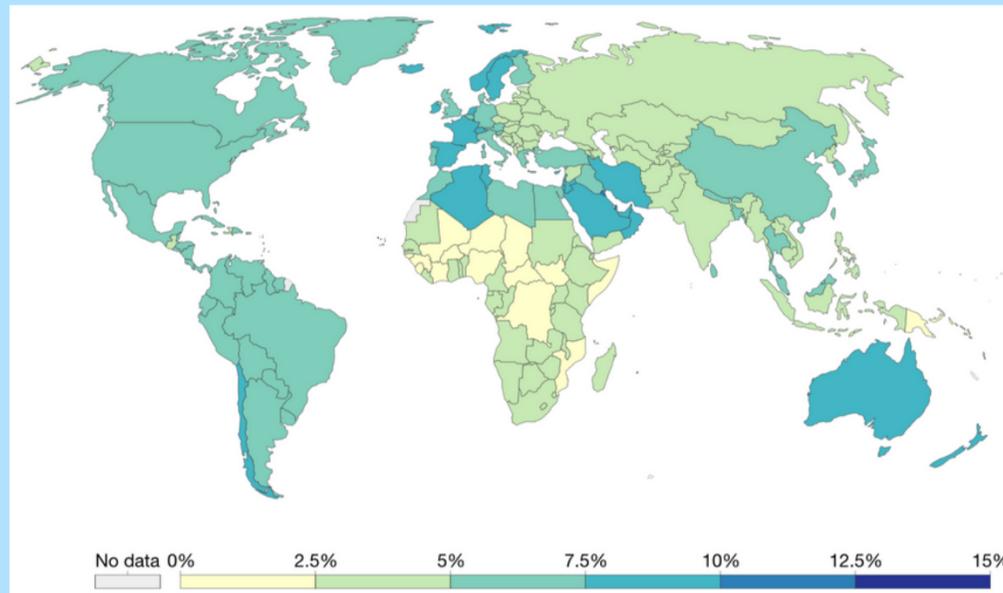
1 million die from suicide
3rd leading cause of death among youth



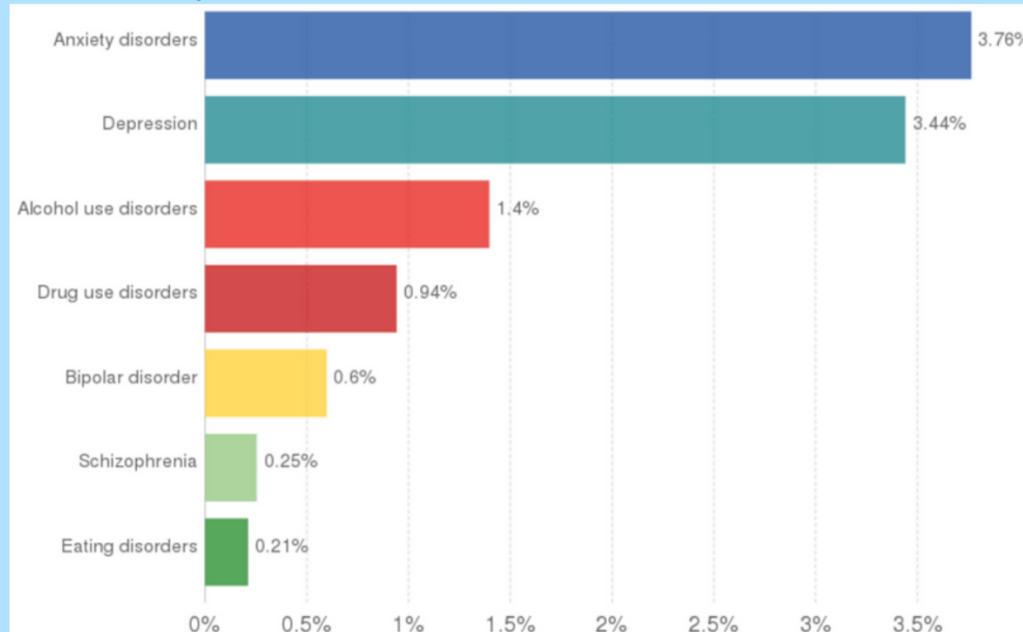
Anxiety disorders are most prevalent among mental health conditions eg. depression, bipolar disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, PTSD, psychosis, schizophrenia



Female are more prone to depression, anxiety, bipolar, eating disorders; while males are more prone to alcohol and drug use disorder



Prevalence by mental and substance use disorder, World, 2017



Source: IHME, Global Burden of Disease

Mental & substance use disorders as a share of total disease burden, World, 2017

- Australia, Europe, Middle East and a few countries in Africa have high prevalence of mental health conditions, accounting for 7.5%-12.5%
- United States and China also have a high burden of mental disorders
- Prevalence of mental disorders may be underestimated due to insufficient data and cases not identified yet
- There is no apparent relationship between national GDP and prevalence of mental disorders

Root causes:

Nature of mental health



Difficult to identify: patients tend to hide and refrain from seeking help

Mental health is a spectrum - difficult to say whether one has a mental disorder

Possibility of relapse even after treatment

Community Level

- Weak community support
- Population density
- Setting (urban/rural)
- Long waiting time for psychiatric services
- Unaffordable treatments
- Stigma on mental health issues



Other factors

- Working/ Academic stress
- Genetics
- Vulnerable groups
- Family background
- Unpleasant past experiences: childhood trauma, harassments, incomplete family, war

Global Level

- Poverty
- Alcohol abuse
- Compromised education
- Race/ gender inequalities
- Violence and conflicts
- Stigma on mental health issues



Effects caused by mental health issues:

Effects on Individual

- Damaged interpersonal relationships
- Increased risk of physical health problems eg. heart disease, diabetes, HIV
- Shortened life expectancy
- Suicide



Burden on Health Systems

- increase medical costs: medication, physician visits, hospitalisation



Work Productivity

- more annual sick days
- higher rate of short-term disability
- less productive at work due to loss in concentration
- cost the world US\$16 trillion by 2030 in terms of lost man hours



Jeopardisation of youth development

- School failure: 10% of children and adolescents suffer from mental illness, which hinders them from learning
- <10% of youth with mental illness move on to post-secondary education
- Inadequate community services render youth into delinquency, substance abuse and committing crimes



Solutions

1 Promotion & Prevention

Children

- Early childhood intervention: Workshops for parents to identify any abnormalities in the child's mental health
- Promotion of a more loving parenting style - parents' attitude towards children directly affect a child's self-perception, self-esteem and mental health

Adults

- Encouraging a more supportive workplace atmosphere: more schemes and subsidies to encourage team-bonding activities in companies (fitness day, parties, family-friendly work flexibility)
 - Ordinances to reduce working stress for adults: eg. Standard Working Hours
 - Stress prevention programs at work
- #### Elderly & other vulnerable groups
- Social support for elderly persons
 - Assessment and monitoring of vulnerable groups eg. post-trauma sufferers, pregnant, disabled

2 Early identification & Timely Intervention

- Educate the general public to help identify cases from their family & friends by offering Mental Health First Aid courses and basic information promoted on social media
- Arrange social workers and counsellors stationing in schools to help youth struggling from unnoticed mental health issues
- Formulate policies to assure universal access to cost-effective services in mental health clinics and hospitals
- Offer one-stop service from identification to treatment - ensure patients continue to receive care

3 Rehabilitation

- Remove social stigma by hosting Mental Health Day to raise awareness in schools, workplaces and communities
- Social workers offer follow-up services to patients after recovery

4 Medical Advancement

- Breakthrough research in neuroscience: study of transmission and receiving of nerve impulses to understand more about how the brain controls our emotions and feelings
- Genetic testing (controversial): screening/ modification of genes in fetus to reduce the chance of having mental health illnesses
- Behavioural Medicine: Focus on more multi-disciplinary healthcare to increase patient's mental and physical health

5 Eradication of global issues related to mental disorders

- Ensure adequate care and protection of human rights with the power of globally recognized organisations eg. United Nations
- NGOs such as Amnesty International, World Vision can take a more active role in eradicating global issues, such as poverty, human trafficking, violence etc.
- Local and global campaigns with the use of social media to combat global issues and promote mental wellness

Milestones for Global Mental Health

 UN adopted the Principles for the Protection of Persons with Mental Illness and the Improvement of Mental Health Care: 25 principles define fundamental freedoms and basic rights

1991

Leaders and health ministers from Western Hemisphere, Eastern Mediterranean, China etc. pledge to support efforts to improve mental health



Establishment of WHO's Mental Health Global Action Programme:

"Close the Gap, Dare to Care" - comprehensive strategy for narrowing the gap between generations and countries and promoting effective mental health services

Successful Campaigns

Act-Belong-Commit Campaign

- Raise awareness
- Induce behavioural change

Five Ways to Wellbeing

1. Connect
2. Be active
3. Take Notice
4. Give
5. Keep Learning

Like Minds, Like Mine

- Community activities
- Educational work
- Policy Development
- Mass media advertising

Conclusion

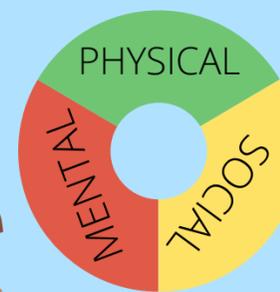
Mental health is a **MULTIFACTORIAL** issue



Mental disorders are among the leading causes of disability

Global issue = Global cooperation

Multidisciplinary cooperation in **promotion, prevention, early identification, timely intervention, rehabilitation**



HEALTH

