



PG Diploma In Public Mental Health

Prospectus, May-2023

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Post Graduate Diploma in Public Mental Health: An Introduction

Mental illnesses are rising and have a widespread impact on functioning across one's lifespan. These illnesses affect not only individuals but families and societies. Recent rapid societal transitions can cause an excessive burden on individuals, stigma, and a lack of help. Low and middle-income countries are facing new challenges in dealing with the increased prevalence of anxiety and depression in younger age groups in the recent COVID-19 pandemic.

Mental health is a public health issue concerning national and international development and security. In low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), most persons with mental and substance use disorders lack access to decent services and effective interventions; the so-called "treatment gap" is estimated to be more than 75-86% in LMICs. The main reasons for this glaring treatment gap are stigma and discrimination associated with MNS disorders, institutional models of care prevalent in most LMICs, and irrational use of scarce human and financial resources.

In order to bridge this treatment gap, the Mental Health Gap Action Program, or mhGAP, was launched by WHO in 2008. It aims to scale care for priority mental, neurological, and substance use conditions, particularly in poorly resourced settings. It delivers integrated packages of evidence-based interventions through primary health care services. Critical strategies for delivering mental health interventions identified include stepped care, task sharing with appropriately trained and supervised non-specialist workers and collaborative care.

The 66th World Health Assembly adopted the comprehensive Mental Health Action Plan 2013–2020 to set a vision and roadmap for mental health for countries worldwide to achieve by 2020. It identifies specific actions for Member States and international and national partners with

agreed targets and indicators. In order to initiate the vision and roadmap set out in the plan, member states of the Eastern Mediterranean region implemented a regional framework for scaling up action on mental health in the 62nd meeting of the Regional Committee in 2015. The regional framework identifies critical strategic interventions across governance, health services, promotion and prevention, surveillance, monitoring, and research. It also provides a set of indicators to monitor progress in implementing these interventions.

One of the critical interventions identified in the regional framework is to enhance the capacities of family physicians and general practitioners to recognize and manage priority MNS disorders identified in mhGAP to scale up mental health care in countries of the region. Several challenges in light of the experience of implementing this strategic intervention, including the need for regular supportive supervision and referral support. This particular challenge is not only due to a shortage of specialist workforce, paucity of financial resources, logistics, and administrative difficulties but also to security concerns in several regional countries. In order to address these challenges, we are proposing to develop a cadre of family physicians and mental health professionals who can provide not only mental health care within PHC settings but also provide supervisory and referral support to their peers and act as a middle layer of between specialists and health care workers to bridge the gap, and provide quality mental health care to the people.

The main aims of the training modules of this diploma are detailed assessments of common mental disorders and ethical practice of evidence-based clinical psychiatry. This diploma course's further objectives are to prevent mental illnesses and promote mental well-being.

Module Overview

Module	Module Name	Training Component	Credit Hours Equivalent	Total Credit Hours
1	Fundamentals of Psychiatry and Foundations of Public Mental Health	Lecture (F2F/Online)	2	4
		Assignments Discussion Board Reflective logs etc.	2	
2	Psychopathology and Psychopharmacology	Lecture (F2F/Online)	1	2
		Assignments Discussion Board Reflective logs etc.	1	
3	Sub specialties of Psychiatry – Assessment and Management in	Lecture (F2F/Online)	1	4

	Old Age, Learning disability, Substance Misuse, Child Psychiatry and Forensic Psychiatry	Project	2	
		Assignments Discussion Board Reflective logs etc.	1	
4	Mental Health in Primary Care and available evidence based interventions – Research based module	Lecture (F2F/Online)	1	2
		Assignments Discussion Board Reflective logs etc.	1	
5	Introduction, Diagnosis and Management of Common Mental Disorders in Primary Care Depressive disorders, Psychosis, Anxiety disorders, Substance misuse disorders, Dementias,	Lecture (F2F/Online)	5	12
		Clinical Skills	5	
		Assignments Discussion Board Reflective Logs	2	

Target Audience:

This diploma is intended for physicians, public health professionals, and students who wish to enhance their understanding and learning in mental health-related specialties. Primary care physicians and mental health nurses may also be interested in pursuing this diploma for other career-building.

Learning Objectives:

The modes of information transfer, syllabus, as well as a table of specifications for assessment, will be based on the following learning outcomes:

- Become aware of the Public Mental Health perspective, particularly preventing mental illness and promoting mental health.
- Exhibit sensitivity and show commitment toward the human rights of the mentally ill.
- Ability to detect priority psychiatric conditions mentioned above,
- Identifying mental health and neurological conditions, particularly those covered in mhGAP in primary care.
- Providing holistic care skills based on biopsychosocial markers of mental illnesses.
- To strengthen the referrals to specialized mental health facilities in cases (including those in children and adolescents) requiring advanced or complex psychotherapeutic treatment, indoor care, or rehabilitative interventions.
- Crisis intervention coupled with risk assessment and risk management training.
- Knowledge about essential psychopharmacology and side effects of Medication
- Provide follow-up and emergency care to patients under specialized mental health treatment.
- Provide supportive supervision to peers in PHC and general healthcare settings and upstream and downstream referral support and coordination.

Student Outcome

- To gain a certified Diploma from an HEC recognized Degree awarding institute and World Health Organisation.
- To maximize their abilities to diagnose and manage mental health conditions independently.
- Refer to the specialists with detailed information on the case.
- To collaborate further with HSA in research and implementation of mental health interventions.

Course Length and Credit Hours

This online and classroom Psychiatry and Public Mental Health Diploma allows participants to study for just one calendar year and is a part-time, distance-learning course. The course is worth 24 credits and comprises five modules of variable credits, each running over six to twelve weeks.

The course will involve regular, supervised full-time placement of students within the mental health teaching and training facilities. Student must-have outpatient, inpatient,

community outreach, and emergency mental health experiences. This experience prepares students for clinical experiences in different settings and for exposure to various patients and ethnic populations.

Eligibility Criteria for Admission:

Anyone who has completed a bachelor's Degree in medicine, psychology, nursing, and public health will be entitled to admission. This diploma will be available nationally and can be attended remotely. 2-4 weeks' attachments will be carried out in the tertiary hospitals. Non-medical graduates may opt to study for six months to achieve Post Graduate Certificate in Public Mental Health, in this certificate 60 hours classroom teaching and three months clinical placement at collaborating institutes of Mental Health of Health Services Academy which are across the country.

Course Fees

The diploma fee will be PKR.120000/ (10% discount on off payment), and the PG certificate can be ascertained for PKR.30000/-.

Teaching Faculty:

Prof Abid Malik (FRC Psych, PhD).
Prof. Mubashir Hanif (PhD)
Dr. Ikhtlaq Ahmad (PhD).
Ms. Syeda Durr-e-Shawar (MS- clinical Psychology, ADCP).

Adjunct Faculty:

Prof. Atif Rahman (FRC Psych, PhD)
Dr. Najia Atif (PhD).
Prof. Siham Sikander (FCPS, PhD)
Dr. Ahmed Waqas (PhD).