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Mental Health as a Public Health Priority

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ABSTRACT

Background: Public health aims to promote healthy lifestyles, as well as to early identification, prevention, and respond to diseases. The prevalence of mental illnesses is under public health concern as it affects individuals' physical and social well-being. Therefore, improving mental health is integral goal to achieve by public health.

Purpose: To incorporate public health into mental illnesses prevention efforts:

- Public Health Promotion.
- Mental Health Research
- Public Health Interventions.
- Strategies and Polices.

Methodology: Qualitative study approach was applied specifically focus group or in-depth interview sessions with (33) mental health experts working as psychiatrists, psychologists, nurses, police, public health, social workers, data experts, dieticians, patients (previous sufferer), and others.

Twelve sessions were conducted.

Key findings:

- Public Health has developed mental health strategy to strengthen and expand comprehensive, integrated mental health services for patients of all ages to ensures that the inhabitants have access to high quality care. The Strategy set up the future strategic direction of mental health services for the next five years.
- In addition to that, there is Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and mental health is part of the policy, it outlines organization's approach to mental health.
- The public health / mental health promotion interventions to be re-designed as "Integrated Approach". In term of contents of raising public NCDs awareness, an integrated approach is needed to target all major common risk factors rather than focusing on one certain types of mental disease in contrast to what is happening annually during mental health awareness month's events which is primarily focused on one type of disease.
- There is a lack of mental health research that needs to be addressed by public health.
- There are over 12 Public Health Community-based mental health initiatives are uniquely designed to support the mental health needs for the resident's population.



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BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Kadhim Alabady, MBBS; MPH; MSc; DrPH; FFPH (UK); FRCP (Glasgow)

Fellow of the Faculty of Public Health UK (FFPH) and Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow (FRCP – Glasgow). Hold a Doctorate degree in Public Health and Epidemiology, Master degree in Clinical Epidemiology (MSc), Master degree in Public Health (MPH), all from The Netherlands Universities with broad experience driving Research and Development (R&D) strategies and operations.

Worked in Public Health since 1999 at different levels such as:

- Academic (Erasmus university – Rotterdam / The Netherlands, Queen Mary University – London / UK), University of East Anglia UEA / Norwich.
- International (United Nations).
- National Health Authority (Qatar).
- National Health Service (NHS), UK.
- Dubai Health Authority.
- others

Registered as Epidemiologist Grade A with The Netherlands Epidemiological Society.

Has numerous publications in the UK in mental illnesses, cancer, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, Dementia, Autism, COPD, population health, road casualties' infectious diseases, vaccination, and others.

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