

Fight against Stigma: An Unmet need for practicing psychiatrists

A WPA Webinar Series.



Stigma, the pervasive devaluation and marginalization of people with mental illnesses has become a matter of major concern for public health officials, academics in social psychiatry, and an important practical issue for health providers involved in the care of people with mental illnesses. Stigma is attached to mental illnesses and to all that touches it, i.e. mental health services, psychiatrists, mental health workers, psychotropic medications, families of those suffering from mental illness and other people taking their care and institutions in which people with MI are treated.

It is time to end all forms of stigma and discrimination against the people with mental health conditions, for whom there is double jeopardy: the impact of the primary condition and the severe consequences of stigma.

Numerous National and International organizations have now included stigma reduction as one of their policy aim. The World Psychiatric Association (WPA) includes a program in its current Action Plan aiming to increase knowledge and skills necessary for work in the field of mental health and care for individuals living with mental illnesses.

WPA through its network of International members is carrying out several activities to reduce stigma associated with mental disorders. Stigma is universal, however in developing countries it is highly prevalent and it results into the treatment gap. Keeping this in mind the current leadership of the WPA under able guidance of President Prof. Afzal Javed has formed a special task force on fighting stigma, especially in Asian region.

The Asian Task Force on Stigma has four major goals;

1. To carry out a critical review of studies looking at stigma in Asian countries focusing on preferences with high income countries, with special focus on role of traditional healers and success of the existing healthcare system.
2. To carry out critical review of literature of intervention programs focusing on failure and success of the program and lessons for the low income countries.
3. To disseminate information about stigma due to mental disorders through academic symposium and webinars.
4. To come up with culturally appropriate and sensitive interventional plans for Asian region.

The WPA Asian Task Force on Stigma has planned webinars on the following dates with expert speakers in this field. Kindly note down the date and circulate the same in members and fellows of your country to help this movement in reducing stigma associated with mental disorders.

Dates:

1. Saturday, April 01, 2023
2. Saturday, May 13, 2023
3. Saturday, June 10, 2023

The dates for July, August and September will be declared later on.

Dr. Mrugesh Vaishnav

Chairman,

WPA Asian Task Force on Stigma