

"Dignity in Mental Health"

Since 2003, beginning as a group of concerned individuals and then officially as a registered NGO in 2009, Chhahari Nepal for Mental Health has been working with others as part of the Nepal Mental Health Network.

Chhahari Nepal for Mental Health [CNMH] works to promote the dignity of a person living with mental distress. The 'shelter' provided by 'Chhahari', respects the individual's right to make their own choice. Accordingly, each person is offered appropriate care and support by Chhahari. Importantly, wherever possible, this support extends to families, as the carers of the mentally distressed person. Experience has shown that the stigma associated with mental illness also impacts the individual's dignity.

Mental health in Nepal is much neglected, not only by society but also by the Government of Nepal's policy and services. Encouragingly, over the past few years, Nepal has witnessed an increased awareness on mental health, especially now, post-earthquake April 2015. This is reflected in the growing number of organisations working in the field of mental health currently.

This increased numbers of organisations advocating for mental health has opened doors for policy change. Consequently, the need to promote respect for the dignity of men and women with mental illness has also been brought to the forefront.

While the Ministry of Health and Population has been positively responsive, this has not been translated into any policy change for mental health or any budget increase. In fact, from 2001 until date, the Ministry of Health and Population's budget for mental health has decreased. In the financial year 2071-2072 [2014/15] the mental health budget allocation was 0.001% of the National Health Budget [source: GoN/ MoHP, 2015] in comparison to 0.14% in 2001.

World Mental Health Day



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