

PSYCHOLOGICAL TREATMENT

# Getting maximum from minimum resources

GRAHAM EDWARD POWELL

Mental Health problems are common in Bangladesh and have a serious impact. According to World Health Organisation (WHO), about 14 million people are suffering from mental illness in Bangladesh and the common problems are depression and anxiety disorders.

WHO says that the impact of depression on functioning is 50 percent greater than that of angina/chest pain, asthma, diabetes or arthritis. Around 40 percent of disability worldwide is due to depression and anxiety. But they are treatable with psychological methods.

Psychological treatment methods are based on scientific evidence and include behavioural activation, cognitive restructuring (helping people see things accurately again), exposure therapy (reintroducing them to situations they have been avoiding), problem solving, panic management, sleep abnormality management.



The need for psychological input is high, but there are not enough clinical psychologists. There are only 39 qualified clinical psychologists that is clearly not enough. Obviously there needs to be an

increase in the number of clinical psychologists trained each year, and an increase in the number of government jobs, because there are only three government posts at present.

It should be noted that the recovery/remission rates after psychological therapy is about 76 percent for depression and 74 percent for anxiety. Clinical psychologists try to promote self help. The intention is to try to make information and self help available to all, e.g. with the web site, leaflets in primary care settings, TV programmes, radio, newspaper columns, magazine features etc. With a little professional input there can be guided self help. There can be advice from assistant psychologists who although not fully trained can have specific roles, working under the supervision of the clinical psychologist.

There needs to be public demand for the effective treatment that exists but which are not yet available to the people of Bangladesh.

The writer is a trustee of the governing body of the British Psychological Society (BPS) & Clinical Psychologist, UK.

GLOBALISATION & LIFESTYLE

## Coping with emerging public health issues

MOHAMMAD TAREQ HASAN

The world is experiencing a demographic and epidemiological transition in the form of increasing incidences of chronic and non-communicable diseases. The change has been regarded as a major challenge for the healthcare system particularly in developing countries like Bangladesh.

A WHO report estimated that 44 percent of all deaths in 2002 were accounted for chronic disease in Bangladesh. The increasing trend of chronic diseases has been regarded as a resultant of changing lifestyles related to food intake, less physical activity and growing tobacco use. All these processes are inexorably linked with the process of globalisation.

As chronic diseases have emerged as major health hazards for the people of Bangladesh, massive information, education and communication campaign should be driven forward to make mass people aware of the possible grave outcomes of continuing the lifestyles that has become a regularity.

Thus, people are to be made knowledgeable about the lifestyle that could act as measures for prevention of chronic diseases. 80 percent of chronic diseases can be avoided through changing food habit, increasing physical activity and ceasing tobacco use.

The writer is an anthropologist.

**HEALTH** *bulletin*

**Blood Clot - Thrombus**

A blood clot forms when blood cells and fibrin strands clump together. A clot that blocks blood flow is called a thrombus.

**Low iron levels may increase blood clot risk**

Low levels of iron in the blood are associated with an increased risk of dangerous blood clots that form in a vein. The findings suggest that treating iron deficiency may help prevent the condition known as deep vein thrombosis (DVT), according to the researchers at Imperial College London in England.

**Gallbladder & appendix surgery safe in pregnancy**

Often surgery is necessary in pregnancy. But many women do not come to a surgeon thinking that pregnancy poses an additional risk during surgery. According to a study published in the medical journal Obstetrics and Gynecology, pregnant women are at no greater risk of developing an infection or other complication after having their gallbladder or appendix removed than their non-pregnant counterparts.

Source: Reuters

## Minimally invasive tool for diagnosis

PROF DR ANISUR RAHMAN

Laparoscopy is an advanced surgical technique in which operations are performed through small incisions and has less surgical complications. Apart from performing surgery, it can be helpful in diagnosis and listed as one of the useful techniques for accurate diagnosis.

It is a procedure that allows doctors to see directly at the structures of the abdomen and pelvis in certain problems which cannot be fully diagnosed through physical examination, x-rays, and other radiological tests. This also helps doctors getting sample of tissue for analysis.

In laparoscopy, a medical scope inside a hollow thin tube connected to a high-intensity light and a camera is inserted inside the body through small incisions. Diagnostic laparoscopy is a very safe and successful procedure with rare complications.

Diagnostic laparoscopy can help to diagnose the causes of abdominal pain, evaluate or confirm the diagnosis of a lump in the abdomen, ectopic pregnancy (when embryo grows other places than uterus), endometriosis and other problems of the female reproductive organs.

The writer is a Coordinator & Senior Consultant, General & Laparoscopic Surgery, Apollo Hospitals, Dhaka.



Laparoscopic surgeons are looking at the screen during a procedure.



## When your child has a headache

Children are thought to be no less prone than adults to dull or throbbing pains of the head. The Nemours Foundation mentions following common triggers of headaches in children:

- Getting insufficient sleep, or rapidly changing the patterns of sleep
- Missing meals or becoming dehydrated
- Taking certain medications

- Being under stress
- Experiencing hormonal changes
- Spending too much time in front of the TV or computer
- Receiving a mild head injury or having an infection
- Spending a long time riding in the car
- Inhaling strong odors
- Consuming caffeine and/or smoking

## CSF and USAID tie up to ensure eye care for children

STAR HEALTH REPORT

Recently CSF and USAID launched a new project to strengthen and ensure eye care services for children, says a press release.

They will help building capacity through training of medical and non-medical personnel in prevention, treatment and referral of children with refractive error, visual impairment, low vision and blindness throughout Rajshahi Division, especially in the under-served area.

Professor Deen Mohammad Noorul Huq, Director, National Institute of Ophthalmology and Hospital and Line Director, National Eye Care, Bangladesh graced the launching ceremony as Chief Guest while Professor Dr Mohammad Muhit, Honorary Executive Director of CSF and Pro-Vice Chancellor of University of South Asia projected the key interventions and benefits of the project.

## Knowing for better living

### In Bangladesh ...

Every year about **1** crore women are indirectly affected by smoking !

Avoid smoking in public place

Avoid smoking in working place

Exercise regularly

Drink plenty of water

Keep away from stressful situations

Consult your Doctor



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