



WITH PROFESSOR DAME SUE BAILEY IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PSYCHIATRISTS LONDON CURRENT CHAIR OF ROYAL COLLEGES OF UNITED KINGDOM AND PROFESSOR OF CHILD AND ADOLESCENT PSYCHIATRY DISCUSSING THE PROPOSAL OF MENTAL HEALTH CURRICULUM IN SCHOOLS IN KASHMIR.

AS PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PSYCHIATRISTS LONDON SHE WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR APPROVING THE PROPOSAL BY GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR FOR MENTAL HEALTH TRAINING IN KASHMIR.



PROJECT DESIGN FOR DEVELOPING MENTAL HEALTH CURRICULUM FOR SCHOOLS IN KASHMIR

Following the meeting between Director Education Kashmir Division Mr G N Itoo Dr Sayed aqeel Hussain Consultant Psychiatrist and Dr Mohammad Muzaffar Khan Consultant Psychologist and Director Police deaddiction services Kashmir on 30TH JUNE 2017 a need was felt for incorporation mental health into school curriculum at primary and secondary care level.

THE EVIDENCE ABOUT THE NEED TO INCORPORATE MENTAL HEALTH IN THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM WAS DISCUSSED IN DETAIL.

As part of the MOU signed between Royal College of Psychiatrists London and Health and Medical Education Department to improve mental health in Kashmir it was agreed to seek expert advice from Royal College of Psychiatrists London to help develop the curriculum as well as share our experiences and challenges with each other with regards to presentation and management of mental health problems in two different cultures and settings.

In this regard Dr Sayed Aqeel Hussain discussed the minutes of meeting which was held between Professor Dame Sue Bailey Immediate Past president of Royal College of Psychiatrists London Current chair of Academy of Royal Colleges of UK and Professor of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Dr Sayed Aqeel Hussain Consultant Psychiatrist and International Coordinator of mhGAP programme in Kashmir.

Professor Dame Sue bailey assured of all technical assistance in developing evidence based curriculum based on presentation ,cultural values and Norms and available resources .

The views and recommendations of Royal College regarding the mental health curriculum were discussed

The Royal College of Psychiatrists saw clear evidence that schools have a major influence on mental health, but that poor child mental health also has a massive impact on schools.[\[i\]](#)

- **Schools need to be encouraged to promote good mental health and wellbeing through a greater focus from the Department of Education .**

- **Schools counsellors need more help to be able to deliver evidence based support. The Government could help to achieve this by setting up a school counsellors' network where schools can get support in training and recruiting counsellors.**

- **Improved links between schools and mental health services are key. The Government need to commit that if their new trials in this area show positive results they will make resources available so that all schools can benefit.**

- **Relevant staff should have access to training, continuing professional development and information in relation to child mental health and interventions to support it**

- **Bullying is probably the most treatable public mental health problem with an evidence-base that we fail to implement[\[u\]](#); we can and should do better**

- **Better access to services could prevent many children from being expelled or suspended from schools because of behavioural issues**

2. Promoting emotional wellbeing, building resilience and establishing and protecting good mental health.

The following three principles need to be taken into consideration in formulating and teaching curriculum in the schools.

Better Mental Health & Wellbeing

Better balance between well being and attainment.

Better Training and Support for School Staff on Mental Health

We believe that these three principles need to be in place in order to build resilient organisations, as well as resilient people within them. This fits within a whole school approach that ensures that the culture within the school and the leadership embrace and understand the importance of mental health and wellbeing and its impact on pupils' learning and development

To implement these key principles, schools need to be adequately resourced and supported in order to play their part within a wider system, to support pupils' mental health and wellbeing.

Better Balance between Wellbeing and Attainment

Government, school leaders, teachers, parents and those governing or inspecting schools need to actively advocate pupil mental health and wellbeing alongside academic attainment.

- Schools should, when necessary, be encouraged to fulfil their existing duties with regards to promoting pupils' wellbeing.
- Government should actively encourage all schools to strive towards a better balance in the curriculum, which incorporates mental health and wellbeing within PSHE lessons and the wider curriculum. These lessons need to be well taught, of high quality and address pupils' needs.
- Department of Education should use its existing mandate in the schools inspection framework to assess how schools are promoting wellbeing. They should highlight and celebrate what schools are already doing, and ensure they are rewarded for it.

Better Training and Support for School Staff on Mental Health

Policy and adequate resources are needed to ensure that all school staff receive training in children and young people's mental health and wellbeing and child and young people's development. School staff should be able to identify and respond compassionately to mental health problems, and know how to signpost a pupil to targeted support.

- Training should be for both new and existing teachers.
- It needs to be fit for purpose and should offer a module around mental health and wellbeing, that equips them to deal with issues in practice
- Continued professional development is essential to keep skills up to date and ensure all teachers have adequate training

Government and school leaders should ensure that school staff are

more aware of their own mental health and how to look after it.

- Schools should ensure that the culture of the school includes support for teachers

- Schools need to build in time in the busy school day for supervision

Better Support for Children and Young People When Needed

Essential that there is appropriate, targeted support both within schools and colleges, and the local community to promote and support the mental health and wellbeing of all pupils. This support could be available within the school or the community, and could be provided by statutory services e.g. Government or other providers such as the voluntary sector.

- Government should ensure that local areas are using the monies announced for children and young people's mental health to implement their Local Transformation Plans and Future in Mind.
- schools are involved as key plays in Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNAs), local transformation plans, commissioning plans and so on.
- Government and local agencies to encourage the building of good relationships between schools and other partners, to establish joint working arrangements, referral pathways, share skills, knowledge and expertise, and they can train and learn from each other.
- Schools need to be adequately resourced so they can involve parents/carers and families because a child's life extends beyond the school gate.

Why it is important?

All children and young people have a right to be healthy, have access to health care and to have a good education that helps them reach their full potential. The WHO's definition of health covers mental health as well as physical health. This is important as 1 in 10 children and young people have a diagnosable mental disorder; and about half a million children are unhappy and dissatisfied with their lives. There are some groups of children and young people, such as those with learning disabilities or neurodevelopmental disorders, who have a higher risk of developing mental health problems.

Children and young people tell us that they want access to mental health support when, how, and where they need it. Schools are ideally placed to be a hub for mental health support because this is where the majority of children and young people are.

Virtuous Circle

Programmes that support social and emotional learning have been shown to promote attainment. Conversely, good education, which is a protective factor for mental health, can help reduce the chances of developing mental health problems. This creates a virtuous circle. So it is important to encourage and fund schools to properly implement evidence based, social and emotional learning programmes in order to

get good outcomes.

Government policy should encourage schools to develop character, resilience and good mental health alongside academic attainment to equip young people with the skills to fulfil their potential.

We Need your Support

We are calling on all relevant stakeholders to support and implement these key principles on delivering improved children and young people's mental health and wellbeing in schools.

Whilst Government has a key role to play, other organisations, voluntary sector organisations, teachers' unions, and of course schools themselves, all have a role to play as well.

To effectively improve the mental health in schools using the above principles it was important to get insight into the presentations of mental health problems, predisposing, precipitating and maintaining factors so that effective components are addressed in the school curriculum taking into consideration the cultural values, beliefs and resources available.

GATHERING DATA.

Teachers/counsellors/psychologists who have experience and or interested in contributing to developing and implementation of mental health curriculum in schools need to be delegated responsibility to gather data regarding various mental health related problems that students from various grades present in schools.

The data can be in the form of case vignettes and presentations which will then be analysed to get an overview of the various presentations across various schools and districts.

These case vignettes will then be used to identify common problems using a bio/psycho/social approach followed by recommendations and solutions based on cultural factors and available resources.

It is recommended to have a pilot schools in the districts where recommendations and solutions can be implemented to evaluate the effectiveness as well generate recommendations for additional resources including manpower.

Committed teachers to be deputed for specific training who then can be trained as master trainers. As part of MOU between Royal College of Psychiatrists

London and Health and Medical Education Department of Jammu and Kashmir consultants with expertise in child and Adolescent can be invited to conduct specific workshop for training the teachers/counsellars for effective delivery of mental health curriculum including identifying and referring students with mental health need needing specialist input.

Once the recommendations have been validated and professionals been trained as trainers and master trainers the recommendations can be formally published as part of curriculum to be taught across the schools in both private and Government sector.

Setting of command centre in each district which can be contacted directed by schools for expert opinion/advice and specialist referral as well conduct interactive refresher courses and training for new teachers/counsellars.

Teachers/Counsellars should be given incentives for positive contribution towards improving mental health of students in schools and those who contribute positively should be appreciated appropriately.

Funding needs to be allocated both for data collection, evaluation, training as well as publication.

It is worth mentioning that so far three teams were deputed by Royal College of Psychiatrists as part of MOU signed between Royal College of Psychiatrists London and Health and Medical Education Department of Jammu and Kashmir which trained more than 200 professionals including doctors, nurses, psychologists, teachers, social workers and allied professionals in the identifying where possible treating and appropriate referrals using the WHO validated mhGAP intervention module.

Following the training the project was piloted for 3 months in district Ganderbal to see the effectiveness of training and the results were quite encouraging.. The findings were presented by Dr Aqeel at the WHO assembly at WHO headquarters Geneva and the project is being used as role model to be used across the globe.

We hope the above project design will contribute significantly to improving mental health of students in Kashmir and serve as a role model for rest of country.

Following the discussion between Director Education ,Dr Mohammad Muzaffar Khan and Dr Sayed Aqeel Hussain it was decided to initiate the training component of the project on the basis of Ganderbal Pilot project of mhGAP .

A request proposal as part of MOU already signed between Health and Medical Education and Royal College of Psychiatrists London to deliver mental health related training in Kashmir will be submitted to Royal College of Psychiatrists London to delegate Trainers for conducting a three day workshop to train various teachers to identify,,,, where possible provide appropriate support,,,,,appropriate and early referrals and develop practical strategies to implement school mental health programme.

District Srinagar will be chosen as the pilot district and Director Education will depute 30 teachers/professionals for training from various government schools in Kashmir and private institutions will be requested to depute 20 teachers who will have to contribute towards the registration of the trainee teachers.

The three day interactive workshop will develop a blue print for the implementation ,monitoring and evaluation of the impact of training in district Srinagar and the data will be collected by specific teachers/researchers over several months like mhGAP Pilot project in District Ganderbal.

The outcome of the pilot project will help formulate practical guidelines and the project can then be rolled over other districts of Kashmir.

A nodal officer will be appointed who will be responsible for collecting data from all the teachers trained in the three day interactive workshop.

REPORT FORMULATED BY

Dr Sayed Aqeel Hussain (MRCPsych , FRCPsych)

Consultant Psychiatrist

General Psychiatry and Crisis Resolution and Home Treatment

Research Collaborator for PRIME India

Master Trainer for mhGAP

International Coordinator for Projects in Kashmir on behalf of WHO and Royal College of Psychiatrists London