

SPECIAL NEEDS DENTISTRY

MENTAL HEALTH

LECTURE 1

Upon completion of this lecture, the students will be able to:

1. Define the parameters of a Mental Illness.
2. Discuss the 6 Major Types of Mental Illnesses.
3. Explain what is meant by Psychosis and/or a Psychotic Episode.
4. List the 6 different Treatments of Mental Illness
5. Define the term Mental Health Problem.
6. Compare and contrast Mental Illnesses to Mental Health Problems.
7. Discuss the many factors that may contribute to the onset of a Mental Illness.

MENTAL ILLNESS (MI)

-a HEALTH CONDITION that significantly affects

how a person:

- 1). FEELS
- 2). THINKS
- 3). BEHAVES
- 4). INTERACTS WITH OTHERS

- It is diagnosed according to standardized criteria
- The term **MENTAL DISORDER** is also used.

TYPES OF MENTAL ILLNESS

-**MENTAL ILLNESSES** are of different types and degrees of severity.

-The 6 Major Types include:

1. DEPRESSION*
2. ANXIETY*
3. SCHIZOPHRENIA
4. BIPOLAR MOOD DISORDER
5. PERSONALITY DISORDERS
6. EATING DISORDERS

- The 2 most common **MENTAL ILLNESSES** are **Anxiety** and **Depressive** disorders.

While everyone experiences strong feelings of tension, fear or sadness at times, a **MENTAL ILLNESS** is present when these feelings become so disturbing and overwhelming that people have great difficulty coping with day-to-day activities such as:

- Work
- Enjoying leisure time
- Maintaining relationships

- **At their most extreme, people with a Depressive Disorder may not be able to get out of bed or care for themselves physically.**
- **Some may not be able to leave their house.**
- **Some may have compulsive rituals to help them alleviate their fears.**

- Patients experiencing **PSYCHOSIS** lose touch with reality and perceive their world differently from normal.
- Their ability to make sense of thoughts, feelings, and the world around them is seriously affected.

- **Schizophrenia and Bipolar Mood Disorder are examples of Mental Illnesses that involve **PSYCOSIS****
- **A **PSYCHOTIC EPISODE (PE)** may involve delusions such false beliefs, persecution, guilt or grandeur.**

- **PSYCHOTIC EPISODES** may also involve hallucinations where the patient sees, hears, smells or tastes things that are not there.
- **PE** can be threatening and confusing to other people.
- Such behaviour is often difficult to understand for people who are not familiar with it.

TREATMENT OF MENTAL ILLNESS

- Most MENTAL ILLNESSES can be effectively treated.
- Recognising the early signs and symptoms of MI and accessing effective treatment early is important and the key to success.

**-The earlier the treatment starts,
the better the outcome.**

Effective treatments include:

1. Medications

**2. Cognitive & Behavioural
Psychological therapies**

3. Psycho-social Support

TREATMENT CON'T.

- 4. Psychiatric Disability Rehabilitation**
- 5. Avoidance of Risk Factors (harmful alcohol and other drug use)**
- 6. Learning Self-Management Skills**

- Patients with a **MENTAL ILLNESS** may be at risk of harmful alcohol and other drug use. This makes treatment more complex, so that effectively managing alcohol and other drug use is important.
- The risk of **SUICIDE** is increased for people with some **MI**, particularly soon after diagnosis or their release from hospital.

MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

-MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS also interfere with how a person thinks, feels and behaves, but to a lesser extent or degree than a **MENTAL ILLNESS**.

-MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS are less severe than **MENTAL ILLNESSES**, but may develop into a **MENTAL ILLNESS** if they are not effectively dealt with (early on).

- **MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS** are more common than **MENTAL HEALTH ILLNESSES** and often appear after a reaction to the stresses of life.
- **MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS** are usually TEMPORARY

SUMMARY:

-MENTAL ILLNESSES cause a great deal of suffering to those experiencing them, as well as their families and friends.

-MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS are increasing world-wide.

-According to the WHO, **DEPRESSION** will be one of the biggest Health Problems by the year 2020.

Patients with a **MENTAL ILLNESS need the same understanding and support given to people with a physical illness.**

MENTAL ILLNESS is just like any other illness such as heart disease, diabetes or asthma, yet the traditions of sympathy, **support** and flowers given to people with normal illnesses are often denied or forgotten to those with a **MENTAL ILLNESS**.

Remember **MI are not a form of intellectual disability or brain damage!**

- **Myths, misunderstandings and negative attitudes surround many MI. These result in stigma, discrimination and isolation of the patients with a MI, as well as their families and carers.**
- **It is important to talk openly about MI, as this reduces the stigma and helps patients seek early treatment.**
- **As many as one in five Australians may develop a MI at some stage in their lives. Everyone is vulnerable to Mental Health Problems.**

- **When treated appropriately and early, many patients recover fully and have no further episodes of illness.**
- **For others, MI may recur throughout their lives (something “triggers” them) and may require ongoing treatment/care. Similar to physical illnesses (diabetes, heart disease). Like these other long-term health conditions, MI can be managed so that individuals live life to the fullest.**

-Some patients do become disabled as a result of on-going **MENTAL ILLNESS**

-Others--even those who experience major episodes of illness--live full and productive lives.

-People aren't born with **MENTAL ILLNESSES, but a vulnerability to some mental disorders can run in families. For example Bipolar Mood Disorder.**

-Other people develop a **MENTAL ILLNESS with no family history**

Many factors contribute to the onset of a **MI:**

1. Stress

2. Bereavement

3. Relationship Breakdown

4. Unemployment

5. Physical/Sexual Abuse

6. Social Isolation

7. Physical Illness of Disability

• Our understanding of the causes of MI is growing stronger everyday.

-One of the biggest obstacles for people recovering from **MI is confronting the negative attitudes of other people.**

-This often means that people with a **MI face isolation and discrimination just for having an illness.**

-Educate the community to overcome negative stereotypes regarding **MI based on misconceptions.**

-Positive and hopeful attitudes of family, friends, service providers, employers and other members of the community toward people with **MI are crucial to ensuring quality of life for people with **MI** and their supporting recovery.**