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சுவசிரிபாய

SUWASIRIPAYA

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சுகாதார அமைச்சு
MINISTRY OF HEALTH

General Circular No: 02-138/2014

All:

Provincial Directors of Health Services,
Regional Directors of Health Services,
Directors of Teaching Hospitals,
Medical Superintendents of Hospitals,
Heads of Institutions.

World Mental Health Day 2014

“Living with Schizophrenia”

World Mental Health Day which falls on October 10 provides an opportunity to raise awareness on issues related to mental health. It is a good forum to promote an open discussion of issues related to promotion, prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and stigma of mental illness. This year’s theme is “Living with Schizophrenia”.

Schizophrenia is one of the few illnesses that affect the person’s ability to recognize that they, in fact, have an illness, which makes people believe that they don’t need therapy. As a result, there will be a delay in seeking treatment and slowly but surely the illness returns with a vengeance. Therefore, it is important to prevent relapses as it prevents further functional deterioration and consequently improves quality of life. WHO has reported that despite all the improvements 50% of people with schizophrenia cannot access adequate treatment and 90% of people with untreated schizophrenia live in the developing world. Making awareness about the disease and available points of service provision may facilitate to change their health seeking behavior.

At present families are in the forefront of care giving to persons with schizophrenia. However, they are also accompanied by many burdens, which may make them emotionally unstable and they need support to best assist their ill family member. Mental state of the family members will affect the well-being and the outcome of the ill person. It is imperative at this stage to address the concerns of care givers such as burden, distress, stress, anxiety, depression and lower levels of life satisfaction in order to upgrade the mental health of all concerned. In this regard the institutions and organizations involved in mental health promotion have the responsibility to mobilize resources and sensitize the public to enhance and sustain a sound community-based rehabilitation for mentally ill.

Kindly make arrangements to emphasize the theme with active participation of all the relevant stakeholders. A fact sheet is also attached herewith for your information. More details can be obtained from Consultant Psychiatrists, Medical Officers of Focal Point (Mental Health) in your district, Directorate of Mental Health / Ministry of Health.

You are requested to pay due attention to the following;

- a. All PDHS/RDHS are requested to supervise the activities in their respective districts in relation to Mental Health Day
- b. Consultant Psychiatrists, MOO/MH (Focal Point), MOO/MH and MOOH are expected to work together to create awareness among all health staff about this year's WMHD theme. This includes developing appropriate health messages, leaflets, flyers etc.
- c. Organize programmes with relevant target groups; schools, community organizations, civil societies etc.
- d. At least one suitable activity should be conducted at the level of Medical Officers of Health to promote consumer and carer societies to achieve active participation of carers and consumers in supporting each other.
- e. MOO (Mental Health) – Focal Point are expected to forward a detailed report of the activities conducted in the district to celebrate the WMHD 2014 before 30th November 2014 to the Director/Mental Health.



Dr. P. G. Mahipala

Director General of Health Services

