



Bhutan

GENERAL INFORMATION

Bhutan is a country with an approximate area of 47 thousand square kilometers (UNO, 2008). The population is 708,484 and the sex ratio (men per hundred women) is 112 (UNO, 2009). The proportion of the population under the age of 18 years is 36% and the proportion above age 60 is 4% (UNO, 2009). The literacy rate is 80% for men and 68% for women (UN Statistics, 2008). The life expectancy at birth is 64 years for males and 68 years for females (UNO, 2005-2010). The healthy life expectancy at birth is 54 years for males and 68 years for females (UNPD, 2010). The country is the lower middle income group (based on 2010 World Bank criteria). The total expenditure on health as a percentage of gross domestic product is 5.5% and the per capita government expenditure on health (PPP int. \$) is \$101.0 (WHO, 2006). Suicide rate information is not available. In Bhutan, neuropsychiatric disorders are estimated to contribute to 12.1% of the global burden of disease (WHO, 2008).

GOVERNANCE

An officially approved mental health policy exists and was approved, or most recently revised, in 2000. Mental health is also specifically mentioned in the general health policy.

A mental health plan exists and was approved, or most recently revised, in 2009. The mental health plan components include:

- Timelines for the implementation of the mental health plan.
- Funding allocation for the implementation of half or more of the items in the mental health plan.
- Shift of services and resources from mental hospitals to community mental health facilities.
- Integration of mental health services into primary care.

Dedicated mental health legislation does not exist. However, legal provisions concerning mental health are covered in other laws (e.g. welfare, disability, general health legislation etc.).

Note: There is no specific mental health act in Bhutan. However, the penal code of Bhutan has provisions that allow the treatment of patients with mental illness involuntarily.

FINANCING

Mental health and mental hospital expenditures by the government health department/ministry are not available.

Note: The Royal Government is the only source of financing for mental health resources. The mental health budget is less than 1% of total health budget.

MENTAL HEALTH CARE DELIVERY

Primary Care

Prescription regulations authorize primary health care doctors to prescribe and/or to continue prescription of psychotherapeutic medicines. In contrast, the department of health does not authorize primary health care nurses to prescribe and/or to continue prescription of psychotherapeutic medicines. Similarly, official

policy does not permit primary health care nurses to independently diagnose and treat mental disorders within the primary care system.

The majority of primary health care doctors and nurses have received official in-service training on mental health within the last five years. Officially approved manuals on the management and treatment of mental disorders are available in the majority of primary health care clinics. Official referral procedures for referring persons from primary care to secondary/tertiary care exist, as do referral procedures from tertiary/secondary care to primary care.

Mental Health Services

Availability of mental health facilities

	Total number of facilities/beds	Rate per 100,000 population	Number of facilities/beds reserved for children and adolescents only	Rate per 100,000 population
Mental health outpatient facilities	31	4.38	UN	UN
Day treatment facilities	0	0.0	NA	NA
Psychiatric beds in general hospitals	UN	UN	UN	UN
Community residential facilities	0	0.0	NA	NA
Beds/places in community residential facilities	0	0.0	NA	NA
Mental hospitals	0	0.0	NA	NA
Beds in mental hospitals	0	0.0	NA	NA

Access to care

	Rates per 100,000 population)	Females (%)	Under age 18 (%)
Persons treated in mental health outpatient facilities	UN	UN	UN
Persons treated in mental health day treatment facilities	NA	NA	NA
Admissions to psychiatric beds in general hospitals	UN	UN	UN
Persons staying in community residential facilities at the end of the year	NA	NA	NA
Admissions to mental hospitals	NA	NA	NA

Long term care in mental hospitals (% of persons staying):

Less than 1 year	NA
More than 1 and less than 5 years	NA
More than 5 years	NA

Note: Bhutan's Health Management and Information Systems (BHMIS) collects data on patients under and over age 5. No age breakdown below 18 years is made, thus, related data is unavailable.

Data collected in 2011

UN = information unavailable, NA = item not applicable

HUMAN RESOURCES

Workforce and training

	Health professionals working in the mental health sector Rate per 100,000	Training of health professions in educational institutions Rate per 100,000
Psychiatrists	0.28	NA
Medical doctors, not specialized in psychiatry	UN	NA
Nurses	UN	2.96
Psychologists	0.0	NA
Social workers	0.0	NA
Occupational therapists	0.0	NA
Other health workers	0.0	NA

Informal human resources (Family and User Associations)

	User	Family
Present in the country?	No	No
Number of members	NA	NA
Participation in the formulation/implementation of policy/plan/legislation?	NA	NA

Note: Health workers at each level of the health system are provided regular training on skills in management and care of mental health patients.

MEDICINES

Expenditures for medicines for mental and behavioral disorders at country level

Type of Medicines	Expenditures at country level per year and per 100,000 population (in USD)
All the psychotherapeutic medicines ¹	UN
Medicines used for bipolar disorders ²	UN
Medicines for psychotic disorders ³	UN
Medicines used for general anxiety ⁴	UN
Medicines used for mood disorders ⁵	UN

¹ N03AG01, N05A, N05B, N05C, N06A

² N03AG01, N05A, N05B, N05C, N06A

³ N05A (excluding N05AN)

⁴ N05B & N05C

⁵ N06A

Data collected in 2011

UN = information unavailable, NA = item not applicable

Note: A limited number of psychotherapeutic medicines are available in the country's essential drug list. These are provided free of cost to patients.

INFORMATION SYSTEMS

	Data on number of people/ activities are collected and reported	Data on age and gender are collected and reported	Data on patient's diagnosis are collected and reported
Persons with mental disorders treated in primary health care	Yes	Yes	Yes
Interventions (psychopharmacological and psychosocial) delivered in primary health care for people with mental disorders	Yes	Yes	Yes
Persons treated in mental health outpatient facilities	Yes	Yes	Yes
Contacts in mental health outpatient facilities	UN	UN	UN
Persons treated in mental health day treatment facilities	NA	NA	NA
Admissions in general hospitals with psychiatric beds	Yes	Yes	Yes
Admissions in mental hospitals	NA	NA	NA
Days spent in mental hospitals	UN	UN	UN
Admissions in community residential facilities	NA	NA	NA

Note: Mental health data (either on the public system, private system, or both) have been compiled for general health statistics in the last three years, but not in a specific mental health report.

OTHER INFORMATION

Bhutan's Health Management and Information System (BHMIS) collects data pertaining to anxiety, depression and psychosis from district and referral hospitals. Alcohol dependence and poly-substance abuse have been included in the BHMIS since the beginning of 2010.