



Nicaragua

GENERAL INFORMATION

Nicaragua is a country with an approximate area of 130 thousand square kilometers (UNO, 2008). The population is 5,822,265 and the sex ratio (men per hundred women) is 98 (UNO, 2009). The proportion of the population under the age of 18 years is 42% and the proportion above age 60 is 5% (UNO, 2009). The literacy rate is 85% for men and 89% for women (UN Statistics, 2008). The life expectancy at birth is 70 years for males and 76 years for females (UNO, 2005-2010). The healthy life expectancy at birth is 63 years for males and 76 years for females (UNPD, 2010). The country is in the Lower Middle income group (based on 2010 World Bank criteria). The total expenditure on health as a percentage of gross domestic product is 9.55% and the per capita government expenditure on health (PPP int. \$) is \$113.0 (WHO, 2006). The suicide rate for males is 11.1 per 100, 000 population and for females is 3.3 per 100, 000 population. In Nicaragua, neuropsychiatric disorders are estimated to contribute to 19.% of the global burden of disease (WHO, 2008).

GOVERNANCE

An officially approved mental health policy doesn't exist. Mental health is specifically mentioned in the general health policy.

A mental health plan exists and was approved or most recently revised in 2005. The mental health plan components include:

- Timelines for the implementation of the mental health plan.
- 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.). Thus, although there is no specific legislation covering all aspects of mental health, in 2008, the National Assamblea approved the Law 650 "PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS".

FINANCING

Precise mental health expenditures by the government health department/ministry are not available. However, it is estimated that 1% of expenditures in government health care are directed to mental health. Of this expenditure, 91% is directed to the psychiatric hospital.

MENTAL HEALTH CARE DELIVERY

Primary Care

Prescription regulations authorize primary health care doctors and nurses to prescribe and/or to continue prescription of psychotherapeutic medicines but with restrictions. 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 have received official in-service training on mental health within the last five years. It is not known whether the majority of primary health care nurses have received official in-service training on mental health within the last five years. Official referral procedures for

Data collected in 2011

UN = information unavailable, NA = item not applicable

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	34	0.58	2	0.03
Day treatment facilities	4	0.07	UN	UN
Psychiatric beds in general hospitals	UN	UN	UN	UN
Community residential facilities	16	0.27	15	0.26
Beds/places in community residential facilities	UN	UN	UN	UN
Mental hospitals	1	0.02	0	0.0
Beds in mental hospitals	196	3.37	UN	UN

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	UN	UN	UN
Admissions to psychiatric beds in general hospitals	UN	UN	UN
Persons staying in community residential facilities at the end of the year	UN	UN	UN
Admissions to mental hospitals	21.64	48%	0%

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

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

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	0.88	0.48
Medical doctors, not specialized in psychiatry	0.36	UN
Nurses	1.65	5.15
Psychologists	2.04	1.96
Social workers	0.38	1.98
Occupational therapists	0.07	0.0
Other health workers	6.37	NA

Informal human resources (Family and User Associations)

	User	Family
Present in the country?	Yes	Yes
Number of members	UN	UN
Participation in the formulation/implementation of policy/plan/legislation?	Never or rarely	Not routinely

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	1,602,570
Medicines used for bipolar disorders ²	931,964
Medicines for psychotic disorders ³	247,915
Medicines used for general anxiety ⁴	79,941
Medicines used for mood disorders ⁵	21,491

¹ N03AG01, N05A, N05B, N05C, N06A

² N03AG01, N05A, N05B, N05C, N06A

³ N05A (excluding N05AN)

⁴ N05B & N05C

⁵ N06A

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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	No	No	No
Interventions (psychopharmacological and psychosocial) delivered in primary health care for people with mental disorders	No	No	No
Persons treated in mental health outpatient facilities	No	No	No
Contacts in mental health outpatient facilities	No	No	No
Persons treated in mental health day treatment facilities	No	No	No
Admissions in general hospitals with psychiatric beds	Yes	Yes	Yes
Admissions in mental hospitals	Yes	Yes	Yes
Days spent in mental hospitals	Yes	Yes	Yes
Admissions in community residential facilities	No	No	No

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.