



Psychological First Aid For FLW





REFER

MODULE	CHAPTER NO.	TITLE	PAGE NO.
ASHA module on MNS Care	Chapter 3.	Mental Health First Aid (Psychological First Aid)	15-19
MPW (F/M) module on MNS Care	Chapter 3	Psychosocial Interventions	16-21
Operational Guidelines on MNS care			



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- What is Psychological First Aid?
- What are the essential steps of Psychological First Aid?
- What are some key considerations in delivering Psychological First Aid?
- What is the role of family/caregivers in supporting individuals with mental health disorders?



WHAT IS PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID?

Help given to a person with a mental health problem **until** treatment by a **trained** doctor/mental health specialist is available or a mental health crisis is resolved.

Purpose of this first aid is to-

- Preserve life when a person may be a danger to him/herself or others
- Provide comfort to the person and relieve for some symptoms⁴
- Ensure further professional treatment



ESSENTIAL STEPS IN MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID





STEP 1: LISTEN WITHOUT JUDGEMENT

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- Listen to what the person describes without being critical or thinking they are weak
- Don't give advice such as 'just cheer up' or 'pull yourself together'
- Don't forcefully question and avoid getting into an argument with the person





STEP 2: ASSESS THE RISK OF SUICIDE OR HARM TO SELF OR OTHERS

Is the person overwhelmed and helpless about life.
Engage with the person and ask them how they are feeling.

Ask about thoughts of suicide, and specific plans for it.

If **yes**:

- Don't leave the person alone.
- Seek immediate help from an expert on mental health disorders.
- Try remove person from access to means of taking their own life.
- Try to stop the person continuing to use alcohol or drugs.



STEP 3: GIVE REASSURANCE AND INFORMATION

Ensure that individual and family members are reassured and have right information about the condition, including care options.

Tell/ Reassure the patient that

1. This is a real medical condition
2. It is not a shame or weakness of character to have a mental health disorder
3. There are effective treatments available
4. Recovery may take a bit of time
5. You are there to help





STEP 4: ACTIONS FOR SELF HELP

Self help strategies which can help the individual

- Get enough sleep.
- Eat a healthy diet.
- Practice regular exercise.
- Try relaxation and enjoyable activities e.g. yoga.
- Avoid alcohol/other substances (tobacco, ganja etc.).
- Join support groups for women, men or youth.



STEP 5: GET APPROPRIATE PROFESSIONAL HELP

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Encourage the person to consult with CHO or MO- PHC who knows about mental health disorders.

Then follow up with ongoing support to the person and his/her family.

Encourage the family also to consult with the CHO/MO so that they can explain the situation and get professional support.





EXERCISE

Small group discussion: 5 minutes

Larger group discussion: 1 minute each group

- Group 1: Good Sleep
- Group 2: Healthy Diet
- Group 3: Exercise, relaxation, enjoyable activities
- Group 4: Reduced use of alcohol, drug, tobacco
- Group 5: Seeking support from family and friends

EXERCISE

Discuss:

What do you do to take care of yourself and to remain healthy?

What do you and your family/friends do to take care of each other?

Good sleep

Healthy diet

Exercise, relaxation, enjoyable activities

Reduced use of alcohol, drug, tobacco

Seeking support from family and friends

ROLE OF FAMILY/CAREGIVERS

- Living with and caring for someone with a mental health disorder can be very stressful
- Families often don't understand symptoms of a mental health disorder
 - Family provides the majority of support for a person with a mental health disorder
 - Important that the family receives help and support to care for their relative
 - Provide you with important information





HOW TO HELP FAMILY MEMBERS?

- Listen carefully.
- Give reassurance and information.
- Tell them where to get professional help.
- Assure your support.
- Tell them about the behaviours which may lead to increase/reduction in the stress.
- Encourage the family to maintain own interests and social contacts.
- Provide information on any support groups for family members.



REMEMBER- WHEN COUNSELLING A PERSON

- Try to find a quiet place to talk, and minimize outside distractions.
- Respect privacy and keep the person's story confidential.
- Stay near the person but keep an appropriate distance.
- Let them know you are listening.
- Be patient and calm.
- Provide factual information.
- Give information in a way the person can understand – keep it simple.
- Acknowledge how they are feeling and any losses or important events.
- Acknowledge the person's strengths.
- Allow for silence.



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QUIZ (ONE OF THE RESPONSE OPTIONS IS INCORRECT)

1. What is not a part of Psychological First Aid?
 - Assess suicide risk.
 - Encourage professional help.
 - Prescribe sleeping pills.
 - Recommending strategies to sleep better.
2. While giving reassurance and information, we must:
 - Tell the person what to do.
 - Inform the person of potential treatment options.
 - Tell the person that he or she may be experiencing a real medical condition.
 - Tell the person that you are there to help them.



3. What could you do to help family members/caregivers of someone with a mental health disorder:

- Explain to them the symptoms of mental health disorders.
- Encourage them to seek professional help if needed.
- Provide a guarantee that their relative's symptoms will improve immediately.

4. While providing Psychological First Aid, one should:

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- Explain to the person how you can help them.
- Diagnose a mental health disorder.
- Allow for silence.
- Allow the person to cry.





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ROLE OF ASHA

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- Have basic knowledge of psychological first aid.
- Learn how to follow the essential steps - listen, assess risk, reassure and inform, self help and professional help
- If she recognize any symptoms in an individual, inform to MPW-F. At the same time provide the basic care till such special care is available.
- Encourage the individual to access professional medical care at nearest healthcare facility.
- Report to CHO and document all interactions



ROLE OF MPW

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- Provide 'Psychological First Aid' along with ASHAs before the individual can access medical care.
- After diagnosis of a disorder, the treatment will also include psychosocial interventions which include psychoeducation, relaxation training, self-help strategies and strengthening social support.
- Take guidance from the CHO and PHC-MO for the appropriate response.
- Involve family in psychosocial interventions through home visits.
- MPWs and ASHAs will provide support to the family members and provide them with right information about the disorder and available care options.



Thank You

