

# Challenges and strategies for integrated mental health system processes in Nepal

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# Emerald: Overview



**Emerging mental health systems in low- and middle-income countries (Emerald)** was a five year cross country research project (2012-2017)

Funded by the European Commission under the 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme

Its aim was to **reduce mental health treatment gap** by improving the **knowledge base** on how to enhance health system performance in LMICs

# Introduction

- Integration of mental health into primary health care is essential for better access to mental health services.
- Siddhiqi and colleagues governance framework helps us to understand the barriers and facilitators at various levels of governance.



# Objectives

To identify barriers and facilitating factors for integration and scale up of mental health services at:

- System level
- Health Facility Level
- Service User Level



# Methods

- Mixed methods using qualitative interviews and longitudinal facility survey was used.

Methods	Tools	Sample
Survey(Longitudinal)	ACIC	20(Health Facilities)*3(times)
Qualitative Interviews	KIIs	Policy makers(28)+Health workers/managers(63)+ service users and care givers(72)=163

# Results I: System level

## Facilitating factors

Inclusion of mental health in other general health policies and plan

Implementation of few mental health projects

Increasing presence of NGOs and service user organizations in policy forums

## Barriers

Inadequate mental health record keeping system

Inadequate financing mechanism for mental health

Lack of supply chain management of psychotropic drugs

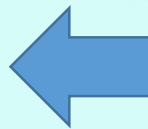
# Perceptions

*“If you see Nepal Health Support Program II (NHSSP II), we have kept Mental Health as an important pillar in the Non-Communicable Disease Chapter thinking that it is important component.”*



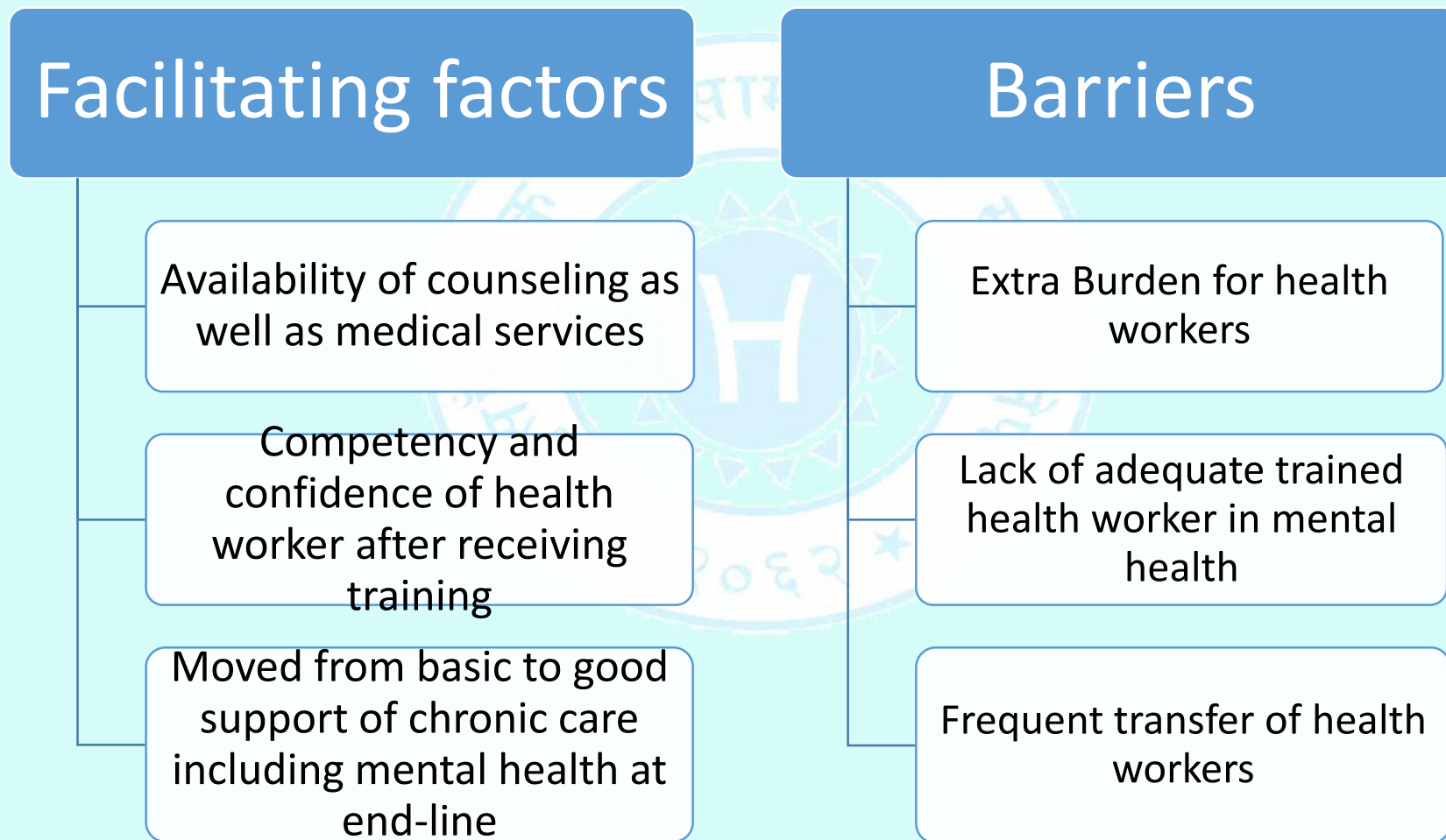
Facilitating factors

Barriers



*“I have heard about HMIS once before. I don't know who uses this system, who is involved, how it is implemented “*

# Results II: Facility level





# Results III: Service User level

## Facilitating factors

Reduced symptoms

Improvement in daily functioning

Reduced expenses

## Barriers

Lack of confidentiality and privacy during treatment

Poor dosage of medicines compared to medicines provided by private clinics

# Perceptions

Facilitating factors

*"The medicine that I took last year was of really high doze...really strong. So if it's like that then I don't think I will take it. If there's medicine of good quality and if it will bring improvement in my condition then I will take it."*

*"After three months I see change in my thought and I came to know that if I think much about something continuously then this problem would occur."*

Barriers

# Conclusion



- Some positive developments have emerged in terms of policy recognition for mental health and implementation of mental health programs.
- There is need of strong leadership and governance mechanism, effective logistical management and increased training in mental health for mental health integration in Nepal.

# Recommendations



- Develop a **separate unit/focal person** for mental health in Ministry of Health
- Effective implementation of **mental health policy**
- Allocation of **adequate budget** for mental health
- Trainings and **regular supervision** on mental health should be conducted for the health workers
- Improve on **incentives/motivational benefits** to existing health staff to compensate work burden
- Improve **overall drug supply chain management**
- **Engage service users** and their caregivers in activities such as development of mental health policy, service delivery and monitoring and evaluation of mental health services

# Thank you

## Questions?

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