
The 5-day workshop aims to build the capacity of primary health staff to be more capable of assessing and dealing with mental and psychological problems, including offering psychological support following traumatic experiences, mental health medications, psychological first aid and how to overcome traumatic stress.

The conditions of people with pre-existing mental problems have further deteriorated due to ongoing armed conflict, displacement, poverty and lack of access to mental health services.

"There is a growing need for psychological support as the conflict continues to exacerbate the psychological status of the population," said Dr Ahmed Shadoul, WHO Representative in Yemen. "We are committed to qualifying human resource capacity to provide mental health services and psychosocial support to those in need."

WHO has so far trained 120 health workers within the WHO plan to integrate mental health into primary health care services. The Organization plan aims to build the capacity of 200 health workers across the country.

Mental health is not well integrated within the programmes of primary health care in Yemen although it is a crucial element in the primary health services, especially during emergencies.
"Due to significant increase in number of mental health patients seeking medical intervention, it is urgent to build the capacity of primary health care doctors by providing them with knowledge and practical management protocols,” added Dr Shadoul.

Currently, the country has only 40 psychiatric specialists and majority are based in Sana’a. This number does not amount to the magnitude of stress of war which left more than 3 million people internally displaced and claimed the lives of more than 6600 people since March 2015.

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Thursday 2nd of May 2019 12:33:22 AM