

SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH LEARNING DISABILITY AND AUTISM IN BANGLADESH

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Bangladesh: Country



Introduction

Children & adolescents in Bangladesh

- <18Y: roughly 45% of population
- >15% need mental health services
- Subject to conditions with negative impacts that affect physical and psychological well being

Introduction

PREVALENCES OF LD & ASD IN BANGLADESH

Childhood Disability (Zaman et al,1997)

Any Disability 6.8%

LD 2.0%

Child psychiatric disorder (Mullick et al,2005)

Any Disorder 15.2% (10.9-20.8%)

ASD 0.2% (0-0.9%)

Introduction

Correlates

- More among boys
- More in urban area
- Higher Co morbidity with Autism-
Hyperactivity, MR, Seizure disorder,
Emotional disorders
- Victim of unrecognising- maltreated,
more distress, impairment & social
disability, stigmatised

Introduction

Magnitude of the Problem

- around 2-3% of Children in Bangladesh have LD & ASD
- severe enough to result in substantial distress or social impairment
- thereby warranting a diagnosis, and warranting management too

Services for Children with LD & ASD

History of Service Development

- 1975 Child Guidance Clinic in DMCH
- 1977 Society for Welfare of the Intellectually Disabled (SWID)
- 1984 Foundation for Developmentally Disabled (BPF)-
for special education and community-based rehabilitation
- 1991 First Child Development Unit began within Dhaka Children Hospital
- 1992 Establishment of Institute of Child & Mother Health
- 1998 First Child Mental Health Clinic in BSMMU (IPGM&R)
- 1998 Child Development Center in Mother & Child Hospital, Chittagong
- 1999 Child Development Center in BSMMU & ICDDR,B
- 2000 Child Development & Neurology Care Center in DMCH
- 2000 National Institute of Mental Health with CMHC

Service Facilities for Children with LD & ASD

- **Tertiary level :**

Assessment, diagnoses, community referral, treatment of co morbidity, periodic review

- **Secondary & Primary level :**

Poor / no efficiency in early detection & and intervention

- **Community Services :**

Screening, Special education, vocational trainings, rehabilitation, hospital referral

Service Facilities for Children with LD & ASD

Tertiary Level of Institutes located at major cities

- **BSM Medical University (BSMMU)**
 - Outdoor-indoor Services in the Dept. of Psychiatry (Child & Adolescent Wing), Paediatrics (Paediatric Neurology Unit & CDC), & ENT (Paediatric Audiology Unit)
- **National Institute of Mental Health(NIMH)**
 - Outdoor-indoor Services (Dept. of Child, Adolescent & Family Psychiatry)
- **Medical College Hospitals**
 - Outdoor-indoor Services in the Dept. of Psychiatry, Paediatrics & Neurology (CDC)

Service Facilities for Children with LD & ASD

Tertiary Level of Institutes located at major cities

- **Dhaka Children Hospital**
 - Outdoor-indoor Services (Child Development Neurology Unit) by MDT
- **Institute of Child & Mother Health**
 - Outdoor-indoor Services, CDC with MDT
- **Institute of Child Health & Children Hospital**
 - Outdoor-indoor Services
- **ICDDR,B**
 - Child Development Unit

Service Facilities for Children with LD & ASD

LD Services at Community Level

- **Society for the Welfare of the Intellectually Disabled (SWID)**
 - National Institute for the Intellectually Disabled
 - Organized Developmental Programme
 - 49 Special schools for LD throughout the Country
- **Bangladesh Protibondhi (Developmentally Disabled) Foundation (BPF)**
 - 2 Special Schools for LD
 - Vocational training
 - Distance Training Programme for the outreached children with LD
 - 6 Rehabilitation Programme Centres
- **National Centre for Special Education**
 - Special school , vocational training and residential care at Dhaka
- **National Institute for Mentally Retarded Children**
 - Special school and residential care at Chittagong

Service Facilities for Children with ASD

Services for Autism at Community Level

- **Training & Education for Autistic Children (TEACH)**
- **Society for the Welfare of the Autistic Children (SWAC)**
 - 1 school for 84 autistic children in Dhaka
 - Parental counselling & education
 - Awareness programme
- **Autism Welfare Foundation (AWF)**
 - 1 School for 50 autistic children in Dhaka
 - Distance Training Programme for the outreached children with ASD
- **Beautiful Mind**
 - 1 school in Dhaka
- **School for Gifted Children**
 - 3 schools – 1 in Dhaka, 2 in Rajshahi
- **Other 11 Schools**
 - Almost all in Dhaka, poorly organized, some disappeared

Training Facilities for the Professionals for Children with ASD

- **Psychiatrists -part of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry and Learning Disability Psychiatry in postgraduate curriculum**
- **Paediatrician – small part of Child Development in postgraduate curriculum**
- **Clinical Psychologist- part of Child Psychiatry & Development in curriculum**
- **Social Work- little in child development of the Social Welfare curriculum**

Training Facilities for the Professionals for Children with ASD(Cont..)

- **Training for the professionals of MDT (Doctors, Therapist, psychologists) in Dhaka Children Hospital**
- **Graduation and Masters Course in Special Education in Teachers Training College (Bangladesh Institute of Special Education)**
- **Undergraduate curriculum ?**

Professional Organizations

Shishu Bikash (Development) Network (SBN)

- A forum of professionals of MDT related to Developmental disabilities of Children
- Provides Continuous education in the neurosciences
- Platform for Exchange of information and expertise

Bangladesh Association for Child & Adolescent Mental Health (BACAMH)

- National Organization for the Professionals in Child & Adolescent Psychiatry and Allied Disciplines
- Promote the study, treatment, care and prevention of mental disorders and deficiencies of children and adolescents, and their families
- Adopt the concept of continuing education as a means of maintaining competence in child and adolescent mental health
- Promote national and international collaboration among professionals in the fields related to child and adolescent mental health
- Focus on the practice and research in child and adolescent mental health and to make the knowledge available to the professionals and public through various scientific activities

Existing Services for LD & ASD in Bangladesh

- **Specialized services restricted to tertiary hospitals**
- **Though praiseworthy, except a few, community based services lack both quantity and quality, confined within large cities, costly**
- **Poorly organized schools with inadequate staff**
- **lack of trained service providers**
- **Nonexistence/partly organized MDT**
- **Weak coordination and communication between service agencies**

Existing Services for LD & ASD in Bangladesh

- Little or no access for the vast affected children**
- Massive gap exists between need and service provision**
- Severe shortage of resources, professionals**
- Little prospects of meeting this need in near or far future by developing systematic and planned professional services despite of willingness & ability to accept modernity and scientifically based service model**

Developing Services for Children with LD & ASD: Basic Considerations

- **Different from Western model**
- **Based on available resources**
- **Part and parcel of NHS & NCHS**
- **Integrated part of NMHS**
- **Provided through School Health Service**
- **MDT will be different in composition and competency**
- **Collaborative between health, social & educational agencies**
- **Active involvement of private sectors**

Key Strengths of Bangladesh

- **Strong family & neighborhood support in child care inherent in the culture**
- **Excellent infrastructure of NHS**
- **Adequate “potential” manpower**
- **Growing number of non-government agencies for child care**
- **Increased medical education**
- **Growing awareness about LD & Autism**

Strategic Points for Feasible Services for Children with LD & Autism

- **Adopting a policy to develop resource-based non-specialist services**
- **Adequate provision of training of the trainers for offering training and supervision**
- **Involving “potential” manpower- parents, teachers, child health working staff, GPs, social workers, counselors ,volunteers**
- **Offering short training on Autism to them**
- **Offering coordinated services through health, education, social agencies**
- **Nongovernmental approach with community participation along with Governmental initiatives and support**

Role of RCPSYCH : Few Suggestions

- **Facilitating dialogues**
regional/national psychiatric organizations
- **Coordinated initiatives**
in resources and need based training
- **Assistances and partnership**
in exchange programs mutual assistance
- **RCPSYCH Assistance program**
a package of support

Services for Autism & LD in Bangladesh

CONCLUSION

- **Vast gap between service need and service provisions for children with LD & Autism**
- **Urgent need to develop resource-based feasible service model**
- **Achievement possible through trained and supervised non-specialist professionals**
- **Potential collaboration and networking among regional & international community**
- **Critical role of Agencies-establishing dialogue, assistance and partnership**



Thank you

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