

**R-18/2/2022-PRPP(RU-3)**

**NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

Dated: 13.06.2022

**Minutes of the Workshop on Mental Health Awareness held on 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2022**

The first Workshop on Mental Health Awareness was held on 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2022, at 11:30 AM. The workshop was physically attended by 84 individuals and about 40 individuals joined online. A total of 10 representatives from Central Vigilance Commission, Ayush Ministry and National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission were also present. Justice Shri M.M Kumar, Hon'ble Member, National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) chaired the workshop.

The workshop started with a welcome address by Shri H.C. Chaudhary, Joint Secretary, NHRC. While giving a brief overview about the workshop, he highlighted the importance of mental health, especially in the times of the pandemic. He stated that most of the people suffering from mental illness do not recognize that they are suffering from it, and even if they do, they face a lot of stigma. He reiterated that it is important that people with mental illness are encouraged to seek help and avail treatment, just like any other (physical) disease or disorder.

In the Opening Address, Shri D.K. Singh, Secretary General, NHRC, gave a brief overview of the estimated burden of mental disorder, which continues to grow with significant impacts on health and social, human rights and economic consequences in all countries of the world. He also highlighted that NHRC receives very few mental health related complaints. Some may be due to lack of awareness as well as stigma attached to such disorders.

Justice Shri M.M Kumar, Hon'ble Member, NHRC, in his inaugural address stated that the WHO definition of Health takes into account the physical, mental and social well being, which implies that mental health is also more than just the absence of mental disorders and is a state of well-being in which an individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her

community. He also talked about various developmental theories, emphasizing on the importance of mental health since early childhood.

Ms. Mimansa Singh Tanwar, Clinical Psychologist, Fortis Healthcare made a detailed presentation on various issues relating to mental health. She started the session by highlighting the significance of mental health. She also talked about various myths and facts related to mental health. She shared that almost 1 billion people are living with some mental health disorder across the globe. She stated that there has been 25% increase in anxiety and depression post the pandemic. Every year 700,000 lives are lost due to suicide because of undiagnosed untreated mental illness, so every 40 second there is a suicide. More than 75% of people, who are suffering from a mental illness, remain untreated. She also talked about signs and symptoms of common mental illnesses, how to identify them and when and how to seek help from a mental health professional. The question-answer session was highly interactive. There were interactions related to mental detox, social media hygiene and detox, leadership qualities and tips for maintaining mental health or self care.

The workshop concluded with a vote of thanks by Shri Jaimini Kumar Srivastava, Dy. Director (M&C), NHRC.

Important suggestions emerged out of the meeting were:

- To revive the counseling Cell of NHRC
- To create a Mental Health Helpline for the employees of the Commission
- To form 'Hasya Clubs' within each unit of NHRC
- To organise regular awareness workshops
- Heads of all organizations in the GPO complex must initiate such awareness workshops to ensure mental health of its employees