

GIP-Tbilisi activities

A short report

2021

The ministry and Strategic Plan 2021-2030

**International Expert Commission
(IEC)**

Local Initiative Group



Comments and recommendations – incorporated in the Strategy doc & sent to the Ministry

Commentary on:

Strategy for wellbeing and mental health in Georgia by 2030

International Expert Commission

19 March 2021

Introduction

1. The International Expert Commission (IEC) warmly welcomes the opportunity to offer comments upon the *Strategy for wellbeing and mental health in Georgia by 2030*
2. The IEC is an independent group which is able to offer impartial advice to the government in Georgia regarding further improving the mental health services and mental health system.
3. The members of the IEC are:
 - Professor Dr. Philippe Delespaul, Professor of Innovations in Mental Health Care, Maastricht University/Mondriaan Mental health Trust, The Netherlands.
 - Professor Afzal Javed, President, World Psychiatric Association
 - Professor Elie Karam, Department of Psychiatry & Clinical Psychology. University of Balamand/IDRAAC/MIND, Beirut, Lebanon
 - Rob Keukens. Mental Health Advisor GGZ Ecademy, Tilburg, The Netherlands
 - Lecturer Master Advanced Mental Health Nursing Practice VS GGZ Utrecht The Netherlands
 - Professor Norman Sartorius, President, Association for the Improvement of Mental Health

The ~~absence of an adequate children's' and adolescents'~~ mental health component

According to WHO, "Worldwide 10-20% of children and adolescents experience some sort of mental disorders. Half of all mental illnesses begin by the age of 14 and three-quarters by mid-20s. Neuropsychiatric conditions are the leading cause of disability in young people in all regions. If untreated, these conditions severely influence children's development, their educational attainments, and their potential to live fulfilling and productive lives. Children with mental disorders face major challenges with stigma, isolation, and discrimination, as well as lack of access to health care and education facilities, in violation of their fundamental human rights".

Of course, this sort of statement is pooling together severe and disabling mental health disorders such as Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) which are relatively rare, depending on studies and population 1 to 2% of the 3 to 17 years old, intellectual disabilities 1% whereas anxiety disorders or ~~conduct disorders~~ could be more frequent, depending on the definition and the populations surveyed, and did not require such intensive treatment.

For instance, C&A behavioural/conduct disorders is an umbrella term that includes conduct disorders, which are characterized by repeated aggressive, disobedient or defiant behaviour that is persistent, severe and inappropriate for the adolescent's developmental level²⁴. C&A behavioural disorders are estimated to be an important cause of adolescent DALYs lost in all modified WHO regions particularly amongst 10-14 year old males where in 2015 they ranked in the top five causes of DALYs lost in all modified WHO regions except African LMICs.

Therefore, it would be better to separate child and adolescent (C&A) mental health problems into 3 big groups: neurodevelopmental disorders (as autistic spectrum disorders), psychotic episodes and disorders and emotional and behavioral disorders. These groups require specific identification, management and follow up and specific services.

²³But there are no data about the rate of rehospitalization

²⁴ [Global Accelerated Action for the Health of Adolescents \(AA-HA!\): guidance to support country implementation. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2017](#)

Eka Chkonia
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Microsoft Office User
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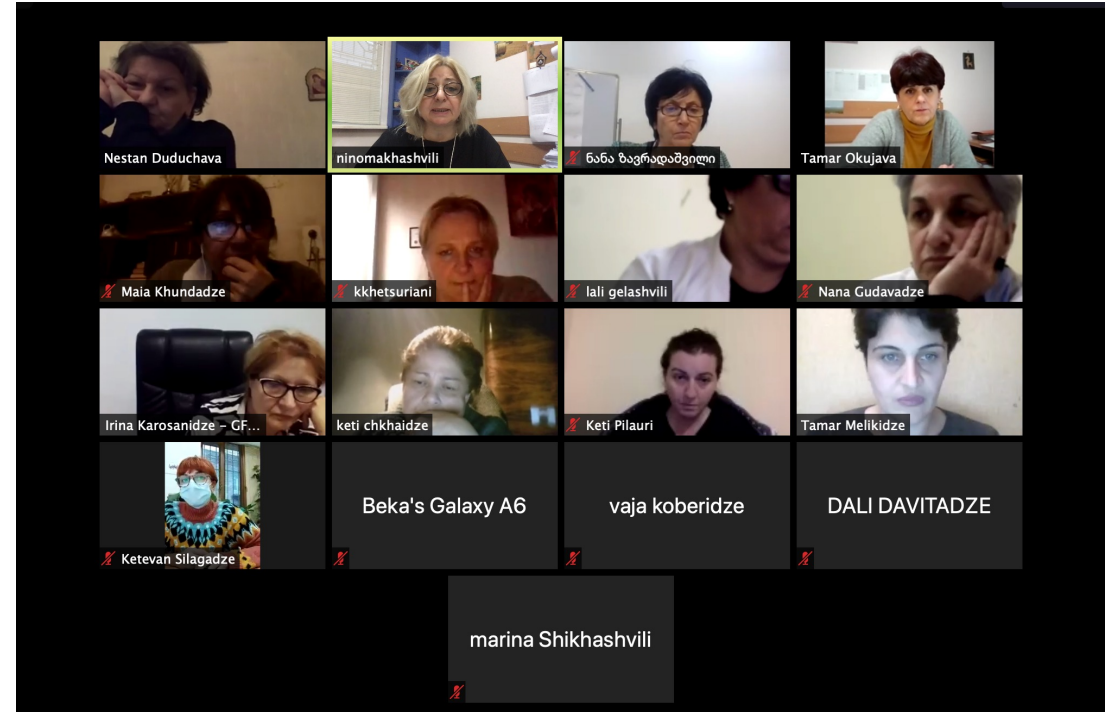
Club Synergy



- Psychosocial service for adolescents and youth, since April 2020 treats adult population as well
- Preventive-intervention programs
- Emotional and behavioral problems, including addiction
- Established by EC funding
- UNICEF and OSGF projects
- Negotiations with the ministry
- At present: GIP-T funding
- PAMAD study

WHO project - PCH

- 6 months (I and II phases)
- mhGAP-IG based, added with other priority disorders as anxiety and stress and trauma-related conditions
- ToTS (14 trained trainers)
- Series of trainings (135 FDs)
- Sessions with patients and supervision (1000 case reports)



Effectiveness study

- The overall **aim** of the study was to assess the impact of capacity building of PHC personnel on population mental health in Tbilisi and Batumi.

Interventions/Management	Percentage
1. Psychoeducation	96%
2. Stress Management exercises: relaxation techniques	72%
3. Guided Imagination	20%
4. Grounding exercises	32%
5. Other	2.6%

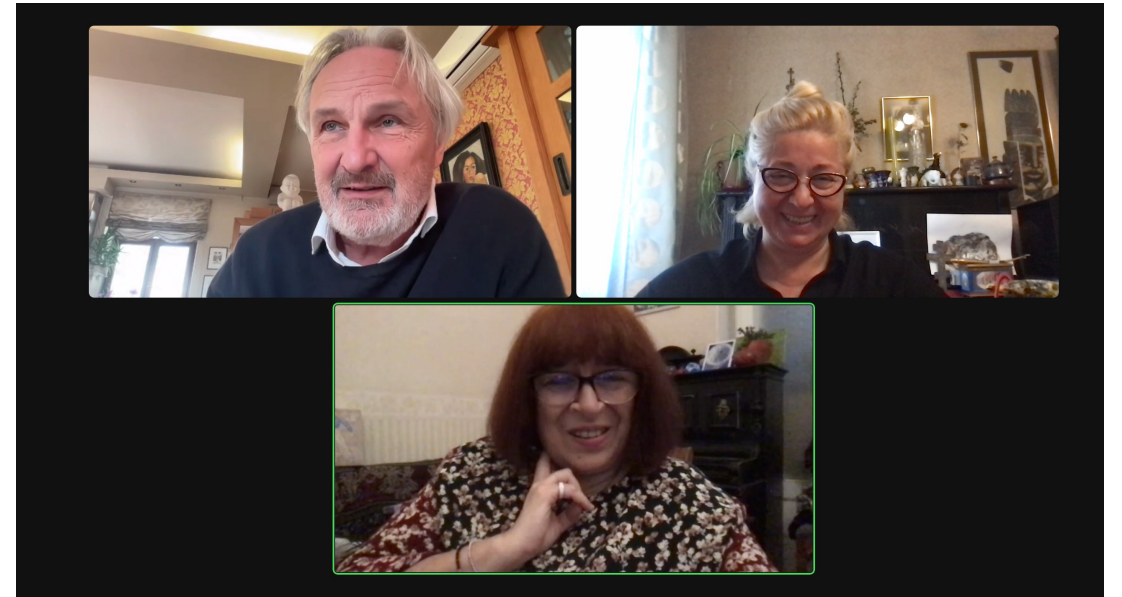
Fig. 4. MHPSS Interventions applied

- Identified problems

MH Conditions/symptoms	%	Number of Cases
1. Depression	39%	178
2. Anxiety	74%	336
3. Adjustment Disorder	4%	17
4. PTSD	6%	29
5. Complex PTSD	0.2%	1
6. Suicidal ideas/plans	0.2%	1
7. Complicated Grief Disorder	0.7%	3
8. Other	7%	33

Belarus

- Under coordination of FGIP
- Organizing trainings on stress and trauma-related conditions with mental health specialists
- Organizing supervision & counselling



COVID 19 cross-sectional study

The overall **aim** of the study is to assess the impact of COVID-19 threat on people's mental health in Georgia.

The specific **objectives** of the study are to:

- Assess the frequency and severity of COVID-19 related stressors
- Examine the prevalence of mental health conditions and how concerns about COVID-19 influence these mental health conditions
- Examine what factors are associated with these concerns and mental health conditions
- Examine what types of coping and support people are utilising to mitigate the mental health effects of concern about COVID-19.

Mental health care: Adverse Sequelae of Covid-19 (MASC study)

- **Co-Principal Investigators:** Professor Sir Graham Thornicroft & Dr Charlotte Hanlon (Addis Ababa University)
- 7 LMICs, among them Georgia
- The ***project aim*** is to answer the question: What are the implications for global mental health services of the Covid-19 pandemic in sentinel low- and middle-income countries (LMICs)?

ILiauni activities and a service

- Study together with Zurich University on MH needs, barriers of access, help seeking
- Students counselling service:
 - working hours expanded
 - includes international students as well;
 - long waiting lists;
 - Trainings;
 - Webinars.



Some other activities

- Annual Trauma Conference
- Webinars and meetings
- Crime prevention agency and US Embassy – psychosocial programs for juvenile delinquents and those on probation
- Harm reduction study
- Translation and publishing of Recovery Guide



Projects submitted

- WHO (3rd phase)
- UNDP (Synergy and additional trainings for PHC)
- EC (app. EUR 1 mln with a string consortium)
- ICC (treatment and rehab of 2008 war victims)

THANK YOU!

