Dr. Smriti G Solomon
Principal, Index Nursing
College, Morodhat, Indore,
Madhya Pradesh, India

Approach to health-Illness continuum in mental health care

Dr. Smriti G Solomon

Abstract
Good health and well-being is one of the third goal of 17 Sustainable Development Goals for 2030. This third goal not only focuses on physical health but also mental health. The World Health Organization (WHO) states that the determinants of mental health and mental disorders include not only individual attributes such as the ability to manage one's own thoughts, emotions, behaviors, and interactions with others but also social, cultural, economic, political, and environmental factors. The left side of the health- illness continuum is the traditional treatment paradigm. wellness is a process and that nurses and doctors should educate and help patients move further along the continuum towards right side high-level wellness through awareness, education, and growth.

Keywords: Health- illness continuum, mental health, mental disorders, treatment paradigm, wellness paradigm, awareness program, education, growth

Introduction
The World Health Organization (WHO) states that the determinants of mental health and mental disorders include not only individual attributes such as the ability to manage one's own thoughts, emotions, behaviors, and interactions with others but also social, cultural, economic, political, and environmental factors. Every year, World Mental Health Day is observed on October 10. In 2022, the objective was "Mental Health And Well-Being To Become A Global Priority For All". This year's 2023 objective is "Raising Awareness Of Mental Health Issues Around The World And Mobilizing Efforts in Support of Mental Health".

Mental health
According to the United States Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps to determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood.
Although the terms are often used interchangeably, poor mental health and mental illness are not the same. A person can experience poor mental health and not be diagnosed with a mental illness. Likewise, a person diagnosed with mental. Mental and physical health are equally important components of overall health. Illness can cause periods of physical, mental, and social well-being disturbances.

Mental health statistics
- 970 million people worldwide have a mental health or substance abuse disorder. (Our World in Data, 2018)
- As per the World Health Organization in 2019 (before the pandemic stuck): 7.5% of the Indian population suffers from mental disorders, which affect more than 13 crore patients in India.
- According to Indian Express (2022), an estimated 197.3 million people have mental disorders in India.
- This included around 45.7 million people with depressive disorders and 44.9 million people with anxiety disorders. The situation has increased due to the COVID-19 pandemic, making mental health a serious concern worldwide. (February 11, 2022)

Corresponding Author:
Dr. Smriti G Solomon
Principal, Index Nursing
College, Morodhat, Indore,
Madhya Pradesh, India

Global Support for Mental Health

Good health and well-being is one of the third goal of 17 Sustainable Development Goals for 2030. This third goal not only focuses on physical health but also mental health. The target is to reduce by one-third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and to promote mental health and well-being.

Mental Disorders

The term 'mental disorders' is used to denote a range of mental and behavioural disorders, with different presentations. Mental disorders include depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia and other psychoses, dementia, and developmental disorders including autism. Let's stand up to stigma and talk about mental health to create awareness among people.

Fig 1: Mental health: why is an issue

Health -Illness Continuum in mental health care

John W. Travis developed the illness-wellness continuum in 1972. He observed that doctors and nurses usually treat illness, which brings a patient to the neutral zone. He believes that wellness is a process and that nurses and doctors should educate and help patients move further along the continuum towards high-level wellness through awareness, education, and growth.
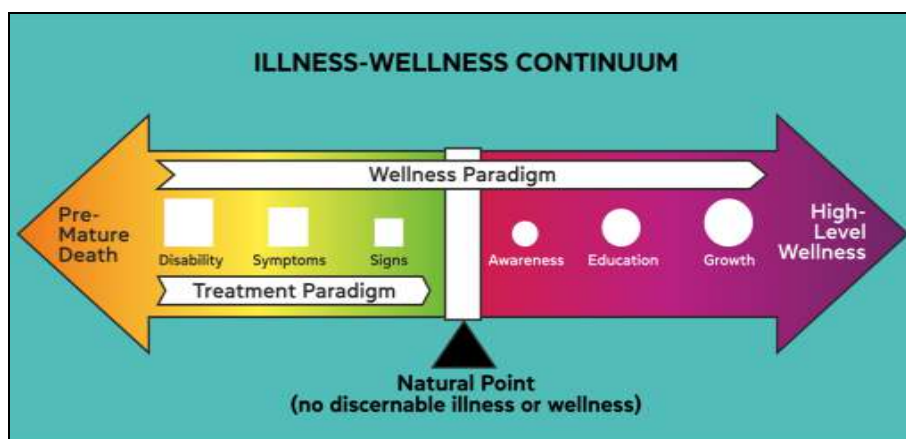

Fig 2: Illness-Wellness Continuum

Treatment Paradigm: The left side of the continuum is the traditional treatment paradigm. The treatment paradigm stops at the neutral point. A person at the neutral point is not well, but they are not sick.

Wellness Paradigm: The goal is not just to reach the neutral point, but to keep moving towards high-level wellness through awareness, education, and growth. Once a patient passes the neutral point, they can begin to work towards the goal of high-level wellness.

Awareness program: Increased investment is required on all fronts for mental health awareness to increase understanding and reduce stigma; for efforts to increase access to quality mental health care and effective treatments; and for research to identify new treatments and

improve existing treatments for all mental disorders.

- Apply a whole-of-society approach to promote, protect, and care for mental health.
- Use social media and traditional methods for mental health awareness campaigns.
- Promote mental health wellness through a healthy diet, exercise, adequate sleep, yoga, meditation, prayers, etc.
- Encourage individuals to seek help from relatives and healthcare workers.
- Conduct training and interventions for workers.
- Encourage individuals to get regular health check-ups and preventive screenings.

1. **Education:** Some individuals with mental health issues might not seek help because of fear, stigma, and poor motivation. Identify them through a network of hospitals and community health workers, and educate them about**:**

- Access to a self-help group and supporting community resources, and educate them on healthy coping strategies.
- Resources for primary screening services for common mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, and suicidal thoughts.
- Access to mental health services to support recovery from mental illness in the future.

Fig 4: Wellness Paradigm

2. **Growth:** Affordable, effective, and feasible strategies are needed to promote, protect, and restore mental health.

- An active outreach programme can be helpful for people with a history of psychiatric disorders to provide mental health and psychological support.
- Provide community support for those at risk and encourage them to stay connected with mental health team members.
- Encourage individuals with mental health issues to remain connected with mental health professionals.
- Help them make an appointment with a mental health professional.
- Help them access support services such as helplines and support groups.
- Encourage them to exercise and eat a healthy diet.
- Encourage them to spend time with family and friends.

Conclusion
There is an immediate need to identify mental health issues, problems, and illnesses. Clinicians, researchers, and policymakers are expected to take the initiative to help individuals with mental health issues in terms of prevention, promotion, treatment, care, and rehabilitation in the post-pandemic era.

Conflict of Interest
Not available

Financial Support
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