

Q → Government schemes have the necessary components to address mental health but more needs to be done in the context of pandemic. Explain.

A → As per WHO, nearly 7.5% of our population is suffering from mental health disorder & this pandemic has gravely exacerbated this issue.

Major Issues while Addressing it

- Absence of visibility
↳ as in case of physical illness which is visible, mental illnesses are not easily recognisable
 - Lack of awareness about symptoms & state of denial even when one knows about his/her symptoms
 - Stigma associated
 - Poor state of ^{health} infrastructure & investment as only 1% of GDP is invested in health & only 1.3% of that is dedicated to mental health.
- The share of mental hospitals is all low as 0.01 per 1 lac population.

Government efforts

- Mental health care Act, 2017 provides a comprehensive framework as it seeks mental health as rights-based.
- National Mental Health Policy, 2014.
- National Adolescent health programme.
- Ayushman Bharat
- Launched Manodarpan portal where mental health patients can get psychiatric support.

Suggestions

- Devise a targetted approach towards women, elderly & younger generation especially.
- Reduce the treatment gap & increase the no. of health personnel in this sector
- families of the patients should also be covered.
- Leveraging technological upgradation such as telemedicine, telecounselling, AI to increase coverage
- School-based program on mental health can improve the mental health of children.
- Industry & private sector should also set up counselling facilities
- Use of IEC channels for awareness generation

- Influential personalities which have faced mental illness issues should come forward to reduce stigma.
for e.g - ~~Deepi~~ Bollywood actresses
Deepika Padukone revealed her experience.

Tackling mental disorders such as depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, etc. comprehensively & efficiently will go a long way ~~is product~~ in ensuring the physical & mental well-being of a citizen.