

Status of child and adolescent mental health services in Mbale, Uganda

Preliminary results from SeeTheChild – mental child health in Uganda



Angela Akol¹
Grace Ndeezi²,
Vilde Skylstad¹,
Joyce Nalugya³,
James Tumwine²,
Ingunn Marie Stadskleiv Engebretsen¹

On behalf of:
SeeTheChild-Mental Child Health in Uganda study group *

Correspondence:
Email: Angela.Akol@student.uib.no



Map of Uganda

Introduction

The objective of this study is to describe child and adolescent mental health services at the public primary health care level in Mbale district, Uganda.



Illustration photo by IMSE

Methods

Tools developed by the WHO mhGAP initiative were used to assess twelve primary health facilities in June to August 2014. The facilities' catchment area combined was approximately 300 000 people. Mental health conditions were recorded from the health management system records books at the health facilities.

Results

- Epilepsy (n=61) was the most frequently recorded condition at the clinics followed by mood and affective disorders (n=22) (Fig). Non-epileptic mental health conditions among children and adolescents were rarely recorded.
- The proportion of children and adolescents among those with recorded mental health conditions was estimated to range from none to 30%.
- Child and adolescent mental health conditions was not included in any annual action plans in any facility.
- All centers referred mental health patients to the referral hospital for treatment, but referral reports were anecdotic.
- There was no communication with traditional healers on mental health.
- Two of the twelve (17%) facilities had received mental health training in the last five years.
- Four out of twelve (33%) facilities had a psychiatric nurse as part of their staff.

Conclusion

Child and adolescent mental health services exist in this district, though it is limited.

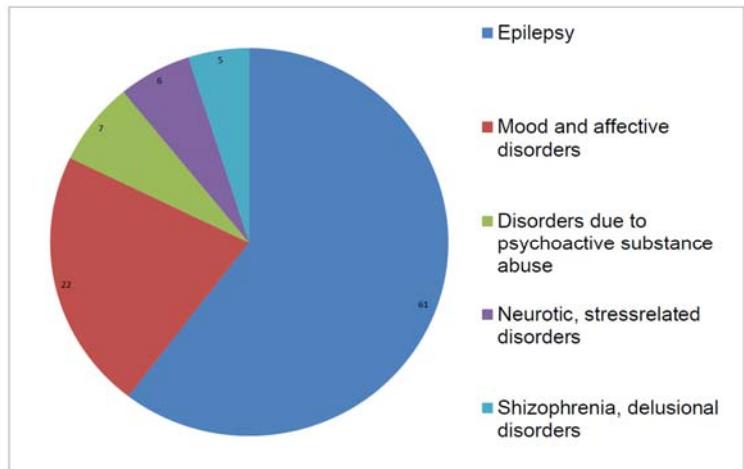


Figure: Numbers of mental health conditions for 6 months in 2014 from 12 primary health care facilities in Mbale district, Uganda

Affiliation

¹ Center for International Health, Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry, University of Bergen, Norway;

² Department of Psychiatry, Mulago National Referral Hospital Kampala, Uganda;

³ Department of Paediatrics and Child Health, Makerere University College of Health Sciences Kampala, Uganda

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