Human Services and Mental Health Crisis in America

Name:

Institutional Affiliation:

Date:

**Human Services and Mental Health Crisis in America**

**Introduction**

In the United States, numerous challenges have been witnessed affecting many people. These challenges arise from diverse factors that affect the population from a health dimension. Nurses and other practitioners play a crucial role in responding to these challenges focusing on community awareness and health promotion. However, their effectiveness may be affected by communicating and collaborating with the underlying populations through community-based interventions. The perceptions held by the target audiences and populations have either a positive or negative effect on health and wellness. Some of the common issues that have been reported in the country from a health perspective include diabetes, hypertension, obesity, and mental health. These challenges affect the population negatively, reducing their effectiveness in handling the current health needs and demands. The government has created a framework for addressing these challenges through policy change and community engagement.

However, regardless of these interventions, the population has witnessed problems affecting their overall wellness and health outcomes. While numerous interventions have been created to overcome the current challenges, it is worth noting that some conditions have proved difficult to handle and manage. These challenges arise from numerous areas such as community awareness, disparities, and social determinants. Healthcare practitioners must understand the influence of these factors and issues in affecting the population from a health dimension. Community engagement remains one of the primary factors that may positively influence the interventions and recommendations regarding handling the conditions. Mental health remains one of the primary challenges facing the majority of the community.

This challenge affects populations regardless of age and other aspects. For example, mental health conditions such as depression, stress, post-traumatic disorders, and schizophrenia are common. However, their prevalence may depend on the population and age. For example, post-traumatic disorders are common among veterans since they encounter traumatizing incidents when deployed. On the other hand, depression, schizophrenia, and other conditions are common in the rest of the population depending on numerous factors such as family relationships and but not limited to their economic statuses.

While the government has allocated resources to assist the population from a health dimension, more mental health incidents have been reported turning to a crisis. Experts argue that it is projected that the country will report increasing incidents involving mental health affecting the available resource and draining other services. This projection has been realized based on the increasing challenges facing many people across the community. The United States has reported increased incidents involving numerous conditions from a mental health dimension. Mental health has been considered a priority due to the increasing incidents while affecting the entire healthcare sector. Increasing mental health challenges among the population will hurt the country`s economy. This hypothesis is based on the perception that many people will reduce their overall productivity hence economic input.

This trend will likely reduce the total gross domestic product reported within the country from multiple sectors. Therefore, the primary stakeholders must address this challenge, focusing on the role of human services. The role of the human services in the country is to provide a reliable intervention for handling the increasing medical conditions and challenges affecting the population. Its effectiveness is based on rally support and resources from multiple dimensions such as the federal agencies, nursing units, and non-governmental institutions to address a common health problem. This interaction creates the ideal framework for responding to the growing community demands from a health perspective. This project will examine the human services and mental health crisis witnessed in the country. This problem will be examined through a literature analysis focusing on the findings of mental health, current interventions, effectiveness, and opportunities for future improvements. Mental health remains a major issue since it affects multiple populations leading to adverse health effects.

**Analysis**

In the United States, multiple health conditions have been reported affecting numerous populations. Some of these conditions affect certain populations more than the rest. For example, the minority groups are likely to suffer diverse medical conditions than the majority of whites due to various factors such as disparities. The lack of a framework for promoting equity in resources provision has affected the ability to maintain a reliable framework for promoting community wellness and overall health outcomes. While numerous interventions have been created and implemented, it is worth noting that challenges continue to be witnessed. At least 1 in every 5 people in the country has been diagnosed with mental health challenges.

One of the common challenges that have been associated with high prevalence in the community is depression. This condition costs the county and government at least $210 billion annual expenditure. This budget shows that the condition requires a significant intervention to promote community wellness and health. At least 50% of the total cost is met by the employers straining the workplace. Mental health has been termed as a crisis since it affects a large population with increasing incidents. It is estimated that about 26% of Americans older than 18 years suffer from mental health challenges. Many people in this group suffer from multiple mental health conditions. While mental health has been recognized as a crisis, it is reported that conditions such as depression occur together with anxiety and substance abuse.

People diagnosed with mental health may fail to access quality care interventions leading to adverse health effects. Further, many people abuse various substances such as alcohol and hard drugs leading to deteriorating health outcomes. Mental health remains a major concern for the country and the primary stakeholders. Numerous recommendations can be deployed to minimize new cases. The government has worked with the primary stakeholders in the health sector through the department of health and human services to create the ideal framework for responding to the community requirements. Numerous federal agencies such as the CDC and CMS have adopted numerous interventions and programs to foster better community health. These interventions can be deployed and replicated in various communities to promote population wellness. Therefore, the country must develop the ideal interventions to promote community wellness and health outcomes through collaboration and resources distribution. This project will gather evidence from multiple sources to provide insight into the current challenges that the country faces in dealing with mental health and promoting population wellness.

**Literature Review**

Numerous studies have been completed discussing the prevalence of mental health in the United States. These studies provide vital insight into the current issues affecting the population from a health dimension, outlining the best intervention to enhance wellness. This section will gather literature from peer-reviewed sources to promote validity and correctness. The selected resources will be recent, meaning that they must not be older than five years. The literature analysis will offer a foundation for understanding the current trends in mental health, challenges, and opportunities. Further, the literature will create a foundation for analyzing the role of human services ranging from nurses to the government through its department of health and human services in providing crucial mental health resources.

It is projected that at least 1 in five Americans is diagnosed with mental health challenges. These conditions range from depression to schizophrenia, according to Gregory, Mallikarjun & Upthegrove (2017). Their prevalence depends on the underlying populations. A report by the National Institute of Mental Health (n.d.) claims that in 2019, the country reported about 51.5 million people suffering from mental health challenges. The degree of prevalence differs depending on the magnitude of these incidents. Some of the cases are mild, while others are severe. The two of the most common categories used in understanding and classifying mental health are Any Mental Illness and Serious Mental Illness. The first category defines all the recognized mental health challenges affecting the population.

On the other hand, the same report defines severe subsets of conditions involving mental health. The prevalence of any mental illnesses in the adult population within the country was 51.5 million in 2019. Additionally, this population accounted for at least 20.6% of the total population of adults in the country. This category reported a higher prevalence in females than men at 24.5% and 16.3%. The report claims that young adults are the most affected by these conditions accounting for 29.4% of the total incidents. Adults between 26 and 49 years reported 25% prevalence, with those over 50 years accounting for 14.1%. From another dimension, the conditions were prevalent more in mixed races than the rest at 31.7%. White adults reported a 22.2% prevalence compared to Asians (14.4%). As the chart below shows, the prevalence of the conditions in the first category differs across races, age, and sex.

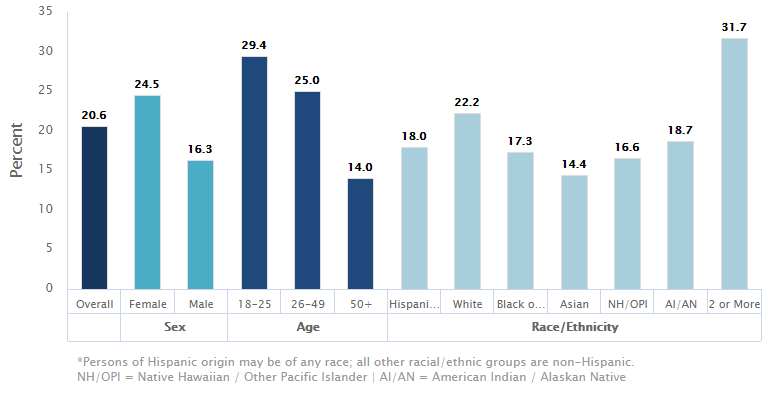


Figure 1. The Prevalence of Any Mental Illnesses among American Adults (National Institute of Mental Health, n.d.).

The National Institute of Mental Health (n.d.) further claims that the second category comprises numerous conditions affecting multiple populations. The Serious Mental Illness category affected over 13.1 million American adults. This population represents at least 5.2% of the total adults in the American community. This category was more prevalent in females than males at 6.5% and 3.9%. Young people between 18 and 25 years reported the highest prevalence at 8.6%. The population between 26 and 49 reported 6.8%, while those above 50 accounted for about 2.9% prevalence. Compared across the population from a cultural dimension, mixed-race people reported the highest prevalence accounting for about 9.3%. This statement shows that while numerous efforts have been adopted within the federal systems, their effectiveness in countering mental health illnesses remains low.

The CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) defines mental health as a collection of aspects affecting emotional, psychological, or social wellness. Mental health affects how people reason, think and interact with each other within their community. The degree of mental health wellness determines how well people deal with challenging situations such as stress. Mental health remains one of the topics in the American population. The CDC (n.d.) argues that mental and physical health affects many people in the United States and may lead to adverse effects and conditions such as diabetes, stroke, and cardiac arrest. People must understand that various factors trigger mental health conditions. These factors may include the presence of a chronic condition or encountering a stressful situation. The treatment interventions adopted in handling these situations may depend on the nature of the illness, and its severity reported.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (n.d.), mental health is a major problem, projecting that at least half the population will be diagnosed with such illnesses. About 1 in every five kids is currently or will likely be diagnosed with mental health challenges. Furthermore, 1 in 25 Americans has been diagnosed with serious mental health challenges and illnesses. The common conditions that have been diagnosed in this population are bipolar disorder, depression, and schizophrenia. While numerous studies have attempted to determine the cause of mental health challenges, no single factor has been documented. Some conditions are triggered by factors such as trauma. Others are caused by substance abuse.

On the other hand, Subramaniam et al. (2017) claim that loneliness and isolation may trigger anxiety, among other conditions. The CDC argues that the diagnosis processes empower nurses and practitioners to determine their underlying problems, focusing on their symptoms and signs. Their historical details are critical in determining the nature of problems witnessed.

A report by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (n.d.) offers insight into the effects of these challenges from a detailed dimension. The report claims that the country reported an increase in the prevalence of mental illnesses over the years. This trend is captured from various dimensions showing the major conditions affecting the Americans. Major depressive disorders accounted for 7.8% of the total illness affecting 19.8% of the population. Additionally, schizophrenia, while affected less than 1% of the population, amounted to 1.5 victims. Bipolar disorders affected 2.8% representing 7 million people. Anxiety, post-traumatic stress, obsessive-compulsive and borderline personality disorders affected 3.6%, 1.2%, and 1.4% representing 9, 3, and 3.5 million people. This data shows that mental health is an important area within the community. Dealing with mental health requires using the available resources to foster better community relationships.

The report adds that mental health matters because less than half of the affected population received the required treatment in 2019. In the report, 44.8% of the affected populations were treated. Additionally, 65.5% of those diagnosed with serious mental illness were treated. Young people between 6 and 17 years reported a significant prevalence, with about 50.6% seeking interventions. While the primary stakeholders have adopted numerous interventions to promote wellness, the country reported an increasing delay between the onset and treatment processes (Kyle, 2018). This trend shows that many people delay in seeking interventions that worsen their conditions. The 11-year delay significantly affects the population`s mental health outcomes since it undermines early detection and treatment.

From an annual dimension, the country reports 36% prevalence in men with 49.7% in women. Additionally, lesbians, bisexuals, and gays reported a 49.2% prevalence of mental health. Asians, Whites, African Americans, mixed racial and Hispanics reported a prevalence of 23.3%, 50.3%, 32.9%, 43%, and 33.9%. It is reported that regardless of the current legislation, 10.9% of adults diagnosed with mental illnesses were not insured. 11.9% of this population was diagnosed with serious mental illnesses. It is worth noting that regardless of the prevalence trends reported above, only 45% of the U.S. counties have operating psychiatrists.

Understanding mental health from a wellness dimension is vital for the primary stakeholders. People diagnosed with mental illnesses are 40% likely to develop complex conditions such as heart-related infections. Additionally, at least 18.4% of the affected populations are likely to experience substance abuse, wherein 2019 and the country reported 9.5 incidents (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2020). The people diagnosed with these conditions are likely to be unemployed, represented by the current 5.8%. Learners with mental illnesses are twice likely to drop out of school due to the complexity of such conditions and reduced resources access. Mental health affects individuals, families, and the community (Dupéré et al., 2018).

From a family dimension, mental illnesses affect the time used in performing daily chores. For example, at least 8.4 million citizens provide mental health interventions and care to victims. Caregivers attending mental illness patients spend over 32 hours every week. Mental illnesses such as mood disorders, substance abuse, and depression are likely to increase hospitalization and emergency department visits from a community dimension. Economically, mental illnesses cost the government over $1 trillion based on lost productivity. This project mentioned earlier that people diagnosed with mental illness are less likely to provide maximum contribution undermining the country`s gross domestic product.

One of the effects linked with mental illnesses is increasing the risk of suicide. Suicide has been ranked as the second leading death causes in the United States between 10 and 34 years. It is the 10th leading death cause in the united states among the entire population. At least 46% of the total suicide incidents have been diagnosed with mental illnesses. About 90% of the people who commit suicide have been diagnosed with mental health symptoms such as stress and depression. The largest population that dies from suicide is male at 78%. While other factors cause suicide, this trend shows that mental illnesses are the primary contributing reasons (Xie et al., 2018).

The United States, through the Department of Human and Health Service, provides interventions and programs to counter community wellness challenges. One of the primary aspects that the department has ventured into is mental health through the primary stakeholders. Mental health, as explained above, is a major challenge for the community. It affects many people with significant effects on individuals, families, communities, and nations. According to Halcomb, McInnes, Patterson & Moxham (2019), the increasing demand for the associated services and interventions calls for new strategies to counter mental conditions. This trend has overwhelmed the available resources to respond to the population's needs focusing on mental health promotion. Therefore, the government has adopted numerous measures focused on promoting community wellness and health outcomes. These interventions have been implemented based on the increasing population demands and needs.

For example, through the Healthy People initiative, the government has created a resource that provides recommendations for those diagnosed with mental illness. The Healthy People initiative claims that suicide and major depressive episodes are some of the leading indicators for mental health. The trends witnessed in the country have triggered the adoption of numerous resources to provide the ideal interventions. The Healthy People 2020 initiative is driven by improving mental health, focusing on population awareness, resources provision, and prevention. Such interventions will help the community to promote wellness since resources will be availed while guaranteeing maximum awareness. This goal is supported by numerous objectives that focus on mental health promotion and community awareness.

The primary objectives are:

1. Reducing suicide rate
2. Reducing suicide attempts in adolescents
3. Reduce the total population suffering from depressive episodes
4. Increase resources availability by promoting access to mental health facilities
5. Increase the proportion of affected adults who seek treatment
6. Increase screening in the community setting

These objectives form a foundation for understanding the current population's current challenges, focusing on improving awareness and increasing resources. The government has launched reliable interventions to reduce new incidents involving mental health diagnoses and increase awareness through these objectives.

According to the research by McBain et al. (2021), numerous interventions can be adopted to foster mental health awareness and guarantee community wellness. Transforming the current healthcare systems to match the growing population demands will play a crucial role in influencing positive responses to mental illnesses. One recommendation is to expand coverage to the population regardless of the prevailing prejudices and other determinants. In 39 states, the expansion of Medicaid coverage has promoted health coverage access to millions of people. Medicaid offers a platform for reduced care costs while availing resources for accomplishing the intended goals. On the same note, the article mentions that equitable coverage focusing on mental health is essential since the primary stakeholders from the federal, state, local, and nursing agencies will deliver services based on patient needs and not their backgrounds. Further, nurses and other players must adopt evidence-based interventions such as cognitive behavioral therapy in countering the conditions.

Human service workers such as nurses play a core role in providing critical services to the population diagnosed with various conditions. In mental health interventions, nurses provide significant support to the affected populations aimed at promoting wellness. With the increasing trends in mental health patterns, social workers require numerous resources provided through the federal agencies to counter the current community demands. Nursing interventions promote community wellness through direct engagement within the population setting. However, the current crisis has made it difficult for the existing workforce to maintain the ideal relationship with the affected populations in mental health interventions.

One of the factors affecting the effectiveness of the selected interventions is cultural diversity. Diversity requires nurses and primary care providers to address customized population needs which differ across the various societies. Using a transcultural nursing intervention has improved the approaches followed in promoting care delivery. This approach creates a unified strategy for addressing the increasing community demands and expectations in mental health solutions. This intervention is replicated in various environments depending on the population in the context. A culturally aware dimension and intervention inform the selected solutions and programs to promote wellness and health outcomes.

Home, school, and community-based interventions have created a foundation for handling mental illnesses. These interventions are supported by behavioral strategies that foster communication and relationships between care providers and the affected populations. The analysis above claims that nurses are players in mental health promotion. Numerous programs within the local setting have been deployed to extend health services to the needy. Counseling and psychiatry programs in schools, communities, and family settings have been created to promote access to resources needed to counter mental health (Gonçalves, Sequeira & Paiva e Silva, 2019).

While nurses and other players have used such interventions to promote wellness in mental health patients, numerous other challenges have affected their effectiveness. Stigma remains one of the primary factors affecting the effectiveness of the adopted measures (Vidourek & Burbage, 2019). Stigmatization affects the community leading to reduced diagnoses and identification. While many people understand the presence and dangers of mental health, they stigmatize victims and patients based on their cultural beliefs and traditions. Such trends undermine the ability to maintain a platform for improved care delivery and wellness achievement. Nurses are responsible for bridging this gap which negatively affects the population. According to Corrigan, Rüsch & Scior (2018), stigmatization reduces the ability to report or present to the clinic with mental health challenges. This trend has widened the delay gap, which this report mentioned to be 11 years. Further, this trend has increased the risks of suicide (Xie et al., 2018). Therefore, nurses and the human services departments through the federal agencies must develop interventions for promoting population awareness about mental wellness and stigma.

**The current gap and Future improvements**

According to the authors, disclosure programs are vital for handling stigmatization against those suffering from mental illnesses (Brouwers, Joosen, Van Zelst & Van Weeghel, 2020). In addition, these programs will provide a foundation for community awareness and empowerment about mental health, which will promote reporting and early medication. One proposed solution evidence-based intervention is the Honest, Open, and Proud (HOP) program. This program has been developed to promote awareness while educating the community about mental illnesses, their effects, manifestation, signs, and symptoms, and the role of stigmatization. Nurses and other community-based stakeholders can deploy the ideal awareness campaigns to ensure maximum knowledge among the various populations through this evidence-based program. Increasing awaree3nsss will reduce prejudice which cuts across racial, gender, sex, and age gaps within the populations suffering from mental health issues. While the government has created a reliable approach for handling mental health, these efforts are likely to fail without such programs.

This project claims that more research is needed to determine the best evidence-based solutions and interventions to boost community awareness about mental illnesses and prevent stigmatization. The Healthy People initiative is focused on availing resources and coverage to the population affected by mental illnesses to reduce suicide and related incidents. The current interventions adopted from a high-level dimension seek to provide resources such as policies and medical supplies to promote quality care. Medicare and Medicaid programs have been developed to improve access to health services at an affordable rate. Empowering nurses and local based human services workers will promote resources distribution and population awareness about mental health. In the future, nurses, the health and human services department must collaborate to deliver a holistic approach and intervention for countering mental health issues.

**Summary and conclusion**

The country continues to report increasing mental health issues. These issues range from depression to anxiety. They affect numerous populations and diverse parties within American society. The statistics provided through this analysis show that the country is in a crisis in managing mental health. The government and other stakeholders play a critical role in mental health promotion through their respective positions. For example, the government operates national state, and local programs and interventions to promote mental health and wellness. These programs avail services to contain and prevent new mental illness incidents.

Regardless, the lack of community awareness on mental health has created room for increased stigmatization and bias, affecting many people. This trend has increased the total incidents reported concerning mental illnesses. Many of the suicide incidents reported are associated with mental illnesses and symptoms. This revelation shows that the 11 years delay between onset and medication is core in fostering community wellness. Stigmatization has undermined nursing and human services efforts to promote community awareness about mental illnesses and the best ways to handle them. However, evidence-based interventions like HOP effectively coordinate medication, treatment, and follow-up within the community, focusing on promoting mental health.

Such programs will likely reduce stigmatization which will lead to increased disclosure. Such a trend will allow nurses and other stakeholders to reach out to more people suffering in silence from mental illnesses. The resulting framework will align the local programs with national initiatives such as the Healthy People 2030 goals in mental health promotion. This project concludes that while stakeholders have developed programs to counter mental health, stigmatization and social determinants undermine public awareness and can be countered through disclosure programs.

**References**

Brouwers, E. P. M., Joosen, M. C. W., Van Zelst, C., & Van Weeghel, J. (2020). To disclose or not to disclose: a multi-stakeholder focus group study on mental health issues in the work environment. *Journal of occupational rehabilitation*, *30*(1), 84-92.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (n.d.). About Mental Health. *USA.gov.* Retrieved from https://www.cdc.gov/mentalhealth/learn/index.htm

Corrigan, P. W., Rüsch, N., & Scior, K. (2018). Adapting disclosure programs to reduce the stigma of mental illness.

Dupéré, V., Dion, E., Nault-Brière, F., Archambault, I., Leventhal, T., & Lesage, A. (2018). Revisiting the link between depression symptoms and high school dropout: Timing of exposure matters. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, *62*(2), 205-211.

Gonçalves, P. D., Sequeira, C. A., & Paiva e Silva, M. A. T. (2019). Nursing interventions in mental health and psychiatry: Content analysis of records from the nursing information systems in use in Portugal. *Journal of psychiatric and mental health nursing*, *26*(7-8), 199-211.

Gregory, A., Mallikarjun, P., & Upthegrove, R. (2017). Treatment of depression in schizophrenia: systematic review and meta-analysis. *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, *211*(4), 198-204.

Halcomb, E. J., McInnes, S., Patterson, C., & Moxham, L. (2019). Nurse-delivered interventions for mental health in primary care: a systematic review of randomized controlled trials. *Family practice*, *36*(1), 64-71.

Healthy People. (n.d.). Mental Health and Mental Disorders. *U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.* Retrieved from https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/mental-health-and-mental-disorders/objectives

Kyle, J. A. (2018). The role of the community pharmacist in mental health. *U.S. Pharm*, *43*(11), 13-20.

McBain, R. K., Nicole K. E, Joshua B, Lori Frank, M. A, Burnam, V, K, & Molly M. S, Transforming Mental Health Care in the United States. *Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation*, 2021. Retrieved from https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\_briefs/RBA889-1.html.

National Alliance on Mental Illness. (n.d.). Mental Health By the Numbers. *NAMI.* Retrieved from https://www.nami.org/mhstats

National Institute of Mental Health. (n.d.). Mental Illness. *NIMH.* Retrieved from https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/mental-illness

Subramaniam, M., Mahesh, M. V., Peh, C. X., Tan, J., Fauziana, R., Satghare, P., ... & Chong, S. A. (2017). Hazardous alcohol use among patients with schizophrenia and depression. *Alcohol*, *65*, 63-69.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2020). Key substance use and mental health indicators in the United States: Results from the 2019 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (HHS Publication No. PEP20-07-01-001). *Rockville, MD: Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration*. Retrieved from https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/reports/rpt29393/2019NSDUHFFRPDFWHTML/2019NSDUHFFR1PDFW090120.pdf.

Vidourek, R. A., & Burbage, M. (2019). Positive mental health and mental health stigma: A qualitative study assessing student attitudes. *Mental Health & Prevention*, *13*, 1-6.

Xie, P., Wu, K., Zheng, Y., Guo, Y., Yang, Y., He, J., ... & Peng, H. (2018). Prevalence of childhood trauma and correlations between childhood trauma, suicidal ideation, and social support in patients with depression, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia in southern China. *Journal of affective disorders*, *228*, 41-48.