

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK
BHARATHIDASAN UNIVERSITY

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A Short report on International Conference on “Social Work and Community Mental Health” held on 16.2.2018 & 17.2.2018

The International conference on “Social Work and Community Mental Health” was organised under UGC-SAP-DRS I on 16th February, 2018 and 17th February, 2018. A total number of 136 participants attended the conference. The conference was inaugurated by Dr.R.B.S.Verma, Former Professor and Head, Department of Social Work, Jain Vishva Bharati University, Ladnun, Rajasthan. Dr.P.M.Natarajan, La Verne City, California State, USA and Dr.K.Sekar, Professor and Registrar, NIMHANS, Bengaluru delivered the special address. Dr.P.Manisankar, Vice Chancellor, Bharathidasan University delivered the presidential address during the valediction and Dr.Kalpna Sarathy, Professor, School of Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Guwahati campus, delivered the valedictory address. Dr.V.Sethuramalingam, Professor and Head and Coordinator UGC-SAP-DRS I, Department of Social Work, Bharathidasan University was the Organising Secretary of this conference. Participants from various states and abroad like Belgium, USA were participated in this conference. Total number of 70 papers were presented in total of 7 sessions on various themes like Youth, Women, Children, Adolescents, Aged, Minority groups, Agricultural labourers and farmers, Migrant labourers and construction workers, people living with HIV/AIDS, Disabled, Alcoholics and so on. In each session, there were lot of discussions and deliberations relevant to the topic. From the discussion and deliberations we have emerged with new knowledge and findings to be recommended for policy makers and voluntary agencies walking in the field of mental health.

- i. In order to prevent mental illness and promote mental health awareness should be created among the community people, especially among vulnerable groups to get a broad view on mental health promotion.
- ii. People in rural and tribal areas still stick on to the superstitious beliefs in mental health domain. In order to prevent their mental illness professionally trained social workers should be appointed in Block level/Taluk level.
- iii. District Mental Health Program should be initiated at Taluk Level/Block Level.
- iv. People must be educated both in formal and informal method in order to create mental health awareness among Slum/Rural/Tribal/Urban people.
- v. Periodical mobile mental health clinic service should be available on the doorstep of the people living in remote/rural/tribal areas.
- vi. Children in rural/tribal areas with mental illness among the community, should be identified by conducting mental health camp and get treatment by mental health professionals.
- vii. Periodical mental health screening camps should be organised at High school and Higher Secondary school level and school social workers should be appointed to carry out/coordinate the mental health programs to provide counselling to the students.