

MEDIA RELEASE

Date of Issue: 12 October 2016

IMH spearheads the second national epidemiological study on mental health

1. The Institute of Mental Health (IMH) is spearheading the second nationwide epidemiological study to establish the mental health status of the adult Singapore resident population. The study will establish the prevalence of mental disorders, identify barriers to mental healthcare in Singapore and investigate the socio-cultural and economic impact of major mental disorders here – these include the association with physical illnesses, the effect of mental illness on work productivity, and the help-seeking pattern of the local population and compare them with the findings of the last study conducted in the year 2010.
2. The survey, known as the Singapore Mental Health Study (SMHS) 2016, is a collaborative effort between three centres – IMH, Ministry of Health (MOH) and Nanyang Technological University (NTU). The Principal Investigator of this study is Prof Chong Siow Ann, Vice Chairman Medical Board (Research) IMH while Asst. Prof. Mythily Subramaniam, Director, Research, IMH is the Co-Principal Investigator. The research team also comprises members from IMH, MOH and NTU.
3. Some 15,500 households have been randomly identified for this household/door-to-door, face-to-face survey. The target is to achieve at least 6,000 completed interviews.
4. Prof Chong Siow Ann, Vice Chairman, Medical Board (Research), IMH, said, “The last national mental health study was conducted in 2010 and with the continuous growth of our population which now stands at 5.61million, there is a need to review the state of the population’s mental health. The findings from SMHS 2016 will

provide that high quality evidence to guide national policies and planning to meet the mental health needs of our nation. It would also give us a good sense of how the mental health landscape has changed in the years since that first landmark study while providing insights into other conditions such as hoarding, schizophrenia, sleep disorders, and suicidality. Overall, the study will provide those vital information that are needed to provide even better care for those individuals with mental health issues, better help their care-givers, and enable us to build resilient communities in an ever-challenging world.”

5. The first SMHS 2010 screened and establish diagnosis of multiple illnesses such as depression, bipolar disorder, anxiety, obsessive compulsive disorder, alcohol use and nicotine dependence in the population aged 18 years and older. It established a lifetime prevalence of five important mental disorders to be 12% among the general population in Singapore and identified treatment gaps for these. The last survey has highlighted the importance of mental health interventions in Singapore and provided input to two mental health master plans initiated by MOH - the National Mental Health Blueprint and the Community Mental Health Master Plan.
6. Asst. Prof. Mythily Subramaniam, Director, Research, IMH, said, “Our team of researchers brings with them a wealth of knowledge and expertise in the areas of qualitative research, epidemiology, health economics and mental health. They are committed to collate, analyse, interpret and ensure the findings of SMHS are useful, comprehensive, accurate and a reliable source of information. Those who have been selected to participate will be part of an impactful study on the mental well-being of the nation. As the accuracy of the findings will depend on the information they provide, their participation and full support in this exercise are critical. This will ensure that the findings are truly representative of the Singapore community.”
7. The MOH and Singapore Millennium Foundation (SMF) have funded this three-year \$4.9 million project, which started in April 2015. The initial phase involved undertaking of the various multiple tasks that led to this actual survey. These tasks have included the refining of the study design, the development of the various instruments, programming and setup for the survey, and training of the field interviewers.

8. The survey will last for about one year from its launch and the expected completion date is December 2017.

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About Institute of Mental Health (IMH)

The Institute of Mental Health (IMH), a member of the National Healthcare Group, is the only tertiary psychiatric care institution in Singapore. Located on the sprawling 25-hectare campus of Buangkok Green Medical Park in the north-eastern part of Singapore, IMH offers a multidisciplinary and comprehensive range of psychiatric, rehabilitative and therapy services in hospital-based and community-based settings. The 2010-bedded hospital aims to meet the needs of three groups of patients – children and adolescents (aged below 19 years), adults and the elderly. Besides providing clinical services, IMH also leads in mental health research and training the next generation of mental health professionals in Singapore. For more information, please visit www.imh.com.sg.

Researchers Involved in the Singapore Mental Health Study 2016

Principal Investigator:

- Prof Chong Siow Ann, Institute of Mental Health

Co-Principal Investigator:

- Adj Asst Prof Mythily Subramaniam, Institute of Mental Health

Co-Investigators:

- Associate Professor Chua Hong Choon, Institute of Mental Health
- A/Prof Swapna Kamal Verma, Institute of Mental Health
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- Ms Anitha Jeyagurunathan, Institute of Mental Health
- Ms Saleha Binte Shafie, Institute of Mental Health
- Professor Kwok Kian Woon, Nanyang Technological University
- Dr Lyn James, Ministry of Health

ENGLISH-CHINESE GLOSSARY

Annex 2

Institute of Mental Health

心理卫生学院

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