

PSY-426 Policy-making and Advocacy in Public Mental Health (3 CHs)

Pre-requisite: None

Course Description:

Advocacy—working for policy change and better implementation of existing policies—is crucial to public mental health. This course aims to provide an in-depth understanding of policymaking and advocacy in the field of mental health. The course will explore the social, cultural, and historical factors that have influenced mental health policymaking and advocacy. Students will also learn the process of policymaking, including the development, implementation, and evaluation of mental health policies. The course will also focus on advocacy strategies and techniques that can be used to promote mental health policies and programs. This course will examine the intersection of public mental health, advocacy, and policymaking. Students will learn how to advocate for mental health policies and practices that benefit communities and individuals.

Course Objectives:

The course will facilitate students to:

- Understand the historical, social, and cultural factors that have influenced mental health policymaking and advocacy.
- Understand the role of mental health advocacy in addressing social determinants of mental health and promoting mental health policies and programs.
- Understand the policy-making process in mental health.
- Develop an understanding of the ethical principles and professional standards that govern mental health advocacy.
- Develop skills in policy analysis and evaluation.
- Gain knowledge about the current mental health policy landscape in Pakistan.
- Learn about effective advocacy strategies and techniques.

Course Learning Outcomes:

As an outcome, the students will be able to:

- Analyze mental health policies and practices to identify their strengths and weaknesses and evaluate their effectiveness.
- Develop advocacy strategies to promote mental health policies that benefit communities.
- Analyze the role of various stakeholders in the policy-making process.
- Communicate effectively with policymakers, stakeholders, and the public about mental health policies and practices.

- Work collaboratively with diverse groups to promote mental health policies and practices that are equitable and just.
- Apply ethical principles and professional standards to mental health advocacy efforts.

Course Content:

- Introduction to Policy-making and advocacy in Public mental health
- Historical, social, and cultural determinants that influence mental health policy-making and advocacy.
- Introduction to ethical principles and professional standards in mental health advocacy and role of advocacy organizations in promoting ethical and professional standards.
- Understanding the Policy-Making Process and designing policies (Stages, factors and identifying key-stakeholders)
- Stakeholder Analysis
 - Definition and importance of stakeholder analysis
 - Methods for conducting stakeholder analysis.
 - Case studies of stakeholder analysis in mental health policy-making
- Policy Analysis and Evaluation
 - Methods for analyzing and evaluating mental health policies.
 - Criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of mental health policies.
 - Case studies of successful and unsuccessful mental health policies
- Policy Implementation
 - The process of policy implementation
 - Overcoming barriers to policy implementation
 - Evaluating the impact of mental health policies and practices
- Mental Health Policy Landscape in Pakistan
 - Overview of mental health policies in Pakistan
 - Strengths and weaknesses of mental health policies in Pakistan
 - Comparison of mental health policies in Pakistan with other countries
- Advocacy Strategies and Techniques
 - Types, methods and tools in advocacy
 - Case studies of successful advocacy campaigns
- Effective Communication in mental health advocacy
- Advocacy Campaigns and social media
 - Using social media for mental health advocacy
 - Strategies for creating effective advocacy campaigns.
 - Case studies of successful advocacy campaigns using social media
- Coalition Building

- Mental Health Financing
- The Role of Research in Mental Health Advocacy
- Mental Health Policy and Advocacy in Practice
- Advocacy and the Future of Mental Health

Reading resources:

- Maylea, C., Makregiorgos, H., Martin, J., Alvarez-Vasquez, S., Dale, M., Hill, N., ... & Weller, P. (2020). Independent mental health advocacy: A model of social work advocacy?. *Australian Social Work*, 73(3), 334-346.
- Dockweiler, K. A. (2023). *Advocating for Mental Health Supports in Schools: A Step-by-step Guide*. Taylor & Francis.
- Lustig, S. L. (Ed.). (2012). *Advocacy strategies for health and mental health professionals: from patients to policies*. Springer Publishing Company.