

National Conference on 'Moving Mental Health Beyond Institutions' takes place in Delhi

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Addressing mental health requires a comprehensive approach encompassing healthcare, education, public policy and social support systems: Justice Arun Mishra



Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare, Dr Bharati Pravin Pawar inaugurated a national conference on "Moving Mental Health Beyond Institutions, on July 26th in New Delhi. The objective of the conference was to discuss the challenges in the implementation of the Mental Healthcare Act, 2017 and deliberate on the way forward on resolution of mental health issues.

Highlighting the importance of addressing the challenges of mental health and the Mental Healthcare Act 2017, Dr Bharati stated that "the Union govt is promoting the availability of and access to cost-effective treatment of common mental disorders". She informed that mental health has been included in the flagship Ayushman Bharat scheme of the Union Govt. She also stated that "since the launch of the National Tele-Mental Health service, 42 Tele-Manas cells have been established that has already recorded over 2 lakh calls".

During the event, a book titled, "Mental Health: Concern for All – In Context of the Mental Healthcare Act, 2017" and a report on "Status of Implementation of the Mental Healthcare Act, 2017" was also released.

The Minister underlined the need for a new mental healthcare paradigm that transcends the limitations of institutions and focuses on community-based support. She urged the dignitaries to deliberate on the pressing issues of mental health challenges in India and work towards a future where mental healthcare is accessible, affordable, inclusive and compassionate.

Highlighting the challenges to addressing mental health issues in India, Justice Arun Mishra, Chairperson, National Human Rights Commission of India noted the need for allocating more funds and resources to update mental health services and research. He also flagged the need for proper infrastructure like recreational facilities in mental health institutions and stressed on increasing the number of educational institutions and seats for professional mental health courses.