

PUBLIC HEALTH IN EMERGENCIES COURSE RedR/IHE/MERLIN

MENTAL HEALTH

Objectives

By the end of the session the participants will:

- have examined and reflected on their own cultural assumptions regarding mental health and mental distress
- have an understanding of the role of cultural belief systems and language in the expression of mental distress
- have an awareness of normal/abnormal responses to trauma
- be aware of the most frequent mental health needs associated with relief / conflict situations
- have reviewed various strategies that could be used to meet these needs

Content

CULTURAL CONTEXT

- Language
- Normality/abnormality

CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE CAUSES OF MENTAL DISTRESS

- Assumptions underlying the medical model in UK psychiatry
- Examples from other cultural perspectives
- “Culture bound” syndromes

CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE TREATMENT OF MENTAL DISTRESS (WHAT HELPS WHOM?)

- Belief and cure
- Universals in healing

MENTAL HEALTH IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

- Normal reactions to abnormal events
- Areas of contention

- Somatisation
- Cultural bereavement

STRATEGIES

- The person in context: psychosocial approaches

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Thoughtfulness, taking care