

Newsletter #1 – April 2020

The intersection of violence, abuse and mental health is under-studied in low and middle-income countries (LMICs). A £5,000 King's College London (KCL) Official Development Assistance Research Partnership Seed Fund grant enabled **iVAMHN** to be founded in 2019, affiliated to the UKRI-funded [VAMHN](#) network.

Please share our newsletter with anyone who might be interested.

Inaugural Meeting 08/10/2019

Our inaugural meeting on 8th October 2019 at the Institute of Mental Health, University of Nottingham featured presentations by researchers, educators, clinicians and film makers about their work on violence, abuse and mental health in LMICs. In the afternoon, delegates discussed priority research questions and opportunities for collaboration, ideas for funding bids for network activities and collaborative research projects and next steps for building and developing the network.

Presentations included (L-R) Dr Julie McGarry (University of Nottingham, on research in South Africa), Ms Urvita Bhatia (Sangath, Goa, and Oxford Brookes University), Dr Abigail Bentley (SNEHA, Mumbai, and University College London: UCL), Ms Epiphania Munetsi (University of Zimbabwe, Harare), Mr Fikru Debebe (Edna Adan University, Somaliland), Ms Oliva Nalwadda (Butabika National Referral Hospital, Uganda), Dr Ligia Kiss (UCL, on research in Vietnam) and Mr Leo Zaidi Broadhead (Ravensbourne University):



During the meeting, PhD researcher Katherine Saunders recorded an episode of the **Mending the Gap podcast**. Find it on [Apple podcasts](#), [Soundcloud](#), [Spotify](#) or Acast.

Survey of Research, Education and Capacity Building Priorities

At our first meeting, **iVAMHN** agreed on the need to hear from researchers, practitioners, voluntary sector workers, people with lived experience and students about research, education and capacity building priorities for this field. **Please complete the survey [here](#)** and share with your networks.

If you are interested in collaborating on the analysis of survey responses for a future publication, please email roxanne.1.keynejad@kcl.ac.uk

COVID-19, Violence, Abuse and Mental Health

All of our work and lives have been disrupted by the unprecedented global Coronavirus pandemic; our thoughts are with you, your communities, patients and loved ones at this very difficult time. COVID-19 will have significant impacts on violence and abuse, as well as population mental health.

The response must be [measured](#), given evidence that inappropriate intervention in emergency settings can have adverse mental health effects. Journals such as [BMJ](#) and [The Lancet](#) have made all COVID-19 content Open Access. The Lancet's mental health-focused publications are accessible via its [Covid-19 Resource Centre](#).

Lockdown situations of quarantine, self-isolation or social distancing can be especially difficult for people experiencing violence and abuse. The UK's [Safe Lives](#) organisation has collated information for survivors, professionals, policy makers, research, briefings and articles on its website.

Deborah Lupton of UNSW Sydney, led a webinar on [Conducting Qualitative Fieldwork During COVID-19](#). There is also an associated crowd-sourced [Google document](#).

If you have found any **resources that would be informative to members, please send them to roxanne.1.keynejad@kcl.ac.uk**

iVAMHN COVID-19 Research

Are you interested in joining an **iVAMHN-coordinated study** of how COVID-19 is affecting violence, abuse and mental health in different LMICs? If so, email roxanne.1.keynejad@kcl.ac.uk mentioning any ideas you have for research priorities in this area. We will then organise a **Zoom discussion** about taking this forward.

iVAMHN Funding

We were delighted to receive two further grants to develop **iVAMHN** and hold future events: a KCL Global Engagement Partnership Fund grant of £5,000 and matched funding from KCL's Psychology & System Sciences Division. We're keen to explore online and remote conferencing ideas until face-to-face meetings can resume.

Contact us if you would like to plan an online **iVAMHN conference!**

VAMHN Webinar

On **Tuesday 12th May** from **10.15 to 12.00 British Summer Time** the UK VAMHN'S [free webinar](#) will focus on understanding violence, abuse and mental health, with talks by Nicole Jacobs (UK Domestic Abuse Commissioner), Joanna Bourke (Professor of History, Birkbeck, University of London), Akiko Hart, National Survivor User Network CEO) and Laura Fischer (Activist, Artist and Researcher) followed by a Q&A.

Opportunities

[The Mental Elf](#) is looking for bloggers to cover the latest research on violence and abuse, trauma, and mental health. If you have mental health knowledge, critical appraisal skills and a knack for writing, they want to hear from you. Contact katherine.saunders@nationalelfservice.net.

Publications and Resources

[Abuse Research](#) publishes monthly **Research Summaries** covering child and adolescent abuse, domestic violence, human trafficking, perpetrators, prevention, elder abuse, cultural concerns and more.

Keynejad RC, Hanlon C, Howard LM. Psychological interventions for common mental disorders in women experiencing intimate partner violence in low-income and middle-income countries: a systematic review and meta-analysis. [The Lancet Psychiatry](#) 2020; 7:173-190. **Open Access.**

Williamson E, Gregory A, Abrahams H, et al. Secondary trauma: emotional safety in sensitive research. [Journal of Academic Ethics](#) 2020; 8:55-70. **Open Access.**

WHO. 2020. [Violence against women](#) hub: now includes a new training [curriculum](#) for healthcare providers on Caring for women subjected to violence, including a range of [resources](#). **Open Access.**



Wishing you and all those close to you well, iVAMHN