

“World Mental Health Day 2015” at BRAC University



Every year, the World Health Organization (WHO) observes “World Mental Health Day” on October 10, with the overall objectives of raising awareness of mental health issues around the world and mobilising efforts in support of mental health. As part of this world wide awareness campaign, a seminar was organized at the BRAC University premises on October 15, 2015 on this year’s theme “Dignity in Mental Health”. The theme encompasses the contrast between dignity and stigma as well as the need for parity between physical and mental health. The seminar was organized by the Counseling Unit of BRAC University in collaboration with the Center for Psychosocial Well-being & SRHRG, BRAC Institute of Educational Development of BRAC University and BRAC’s Gender Justice and Diversity Programme,.

Khan Ahmed Murshid, Strategic and International Programme of BRAC University welcomed the guests. The seminar that followed, highlighted various mental health services provided by the organisers. Later on, a panel discussion moderated by Dr. Nishat Fatema Rahman, Assistant Professor and coordinator of Psychosocial Counseling Unit & SRHRG, BRAC Institute of Educational Development. panelists included Dr. Shaheen Akhter, Professor of Pediatrics and Program Director, Institute of Pediatric Neurodisorder and Autism, *Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University*; Dr. Shaheen Islam, Professor and Chairman, Department of Educational and

Counselling Psychology, University of Dhaka; Khursheed Erfan-Ahmed, Founder Member of Ain O Salish Kendra and Roushan Jahan Parvin, Senior Deputy Director, Support Service & Halfway Home and PSC Unit of Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK).

All the panelists discussed the mental health services they provide, common barriers that the field of mental health faces this day and the initiatives being taken to overcome these challenges in order to uphold the dignity in mental health. Sheepa Hafiza, Director of the Gender Justice and Diversity Programme of BRAC concluded the seminar by conveying thanks to the organisers of the seminar as well as the distinguished guests from various NGOs, universities and organisations.