

Table 1 Key recommendations for strategic interventions for mental health service reorganization for ministries of health in countries of the Eastern Mediterranean Region

Key recommendations for strategic intervention	Essential actions for all countries	Actions for consideration by countries with more resources
<p>1. Integrate delivery of interventions for priority mental disorders, as identified in the WHO Mental Health Gap Action Programme (mhGAP), in primary health care and priority programmes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate care of priority disorders into the basic package of services offered within primary health care. • Integrate care for common mental disorders into the routine care for people affected by noncommunicable diseases, maternal and child health problems and HIV/AIDS. • Ensure availability of essential psychotropic medications in primary health care settings. 	
<p>2. Systematically strengthen the capacity of non-specialized health personnel for providing evidence-based and quality services for priority mental disorders (identified in mhGAP).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the capacity of primary health care workers at all levels to provide integrated mental health care for priority mental disorders, using the mhGAP intervention guide and training materials. • Provide refresher training and supervision to primary health care workers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include recognition and management of common mental disorders into training curricula of all health personnel including integration into family physician programmes.
<p>3. Scale up community-based services, e.g. via community outreach teams for defined catchment areas, supported residential facilities, supported employment and family support.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop, via training/retraining and supervision, multidisciplinary community mental health teams to deliver integrated community-oriented mental health care. • Develop new cadres within the workforce who are appropriate to the needs of the reorganized mental health system (e.g. project managers, case managers and counsellors). • Establish multidisciplinary outreach teams to liaise with and support primary health care services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide psychological, pharmacological and social interventions for children and adolescents with mental health problems. • Develop other community services, e.g. daycare centres and community residential facilities with different levels of support provided by specialized and nonspecialized teams. • Promote integration of mental health interventions with income-generation programmes and social services, e.g. education and housing.
<p>4. Establish mental health services in general hospitals for outpatient and acute inpatient care.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop outpatient care in general hospitals staffed by core multidisciplinary mental health teams catering to a defined catchment area. • Set up inpatient services for provision of care within the defined catchment area of people with acute exacerbations of mental disorders. • Ensure availability of essential psychotropic medications in mental health units in general hospitals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise and coordinate with existing community mental health teams. • Provide liaison psychiatric interventions to other departments of the hospital.
<p>5. Progressively reduce the number of long-stay beds in mental hospitals through restricting new admissions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the needs of long-stay inmates. • Use the WHO QualityRights Tool Kit to monitor and improve the quality of care and dignity of persons admitted to mental hospitals. • Reduce the number of admissions from areas served by community mental health services and/or general hospital psychiatric units. • Plan to progressively reduce the number of beds. 	
<p>6. Provide transitional/bridge funding over a period of time to scale up community-based services and downsize mental institutions in parallel.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine the costs and resources available, and budget accordingly to ensure that reorganization of services is realistic and achievable. • Calculate the costs of each component of reorganization and the total costs for each year. • Define how components of reorganization are going to be financed (e.g. state funding, donors). • Adjust timeframes of reorganization in accordance with resources available in different years. 	