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Stigma related mental health knowledge among community health workers - a cross sectional assessment

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Introduction: The accreted social health activists (ASHAs) or the community health workers have been involved in improving maternal and child health over a decade in rural India. There is growing evidences that in mental health resource poor settings 'task-shifting' strategy would be advantageous, where the community or the lay health workers (like ASHAs) provides front-line mental health care, instead of mental health professional at a primary care level. However, there is limited data on delivering mental health services delivered through ASHAs in mental health resource scarce urban slums setting.

Aim: The aim of the present study is to assess the knowledge and attitude towards mental illness among ASHAs serving government primary health centers in urban Bengaluru, India.

Materials & Methods: A cross-sectional study was conducted among randomly selected ASHA workers (n=150) in urban Bengaluru in the Karnataka state. Data were collected through mental health knowledge schedule (MAKS), and reported and intended behavior scale (RIBS), self-administered questionnaire designed assess mental health knowledge and attitude towards mental illness.

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