# Improving mental health literacy through the OMRA programme

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11th European Conference on Mental Health Ljubljana, Slovenia Sep 13 – Sep 15, 2023 Mental disorders are on the rise worldwide and have a significant impact on individuals' lives and work.

In 2020, the number of people suffering from anxiety and depression increased significantly due to the pandemic COVID -19:

- > 26% in anxiety disorders and
- > 28% in depressive disorders.

## **Omra-What does the acronym stand for?**



The multidisciplinary programme "With increased mental health literacy to better management of mood disorders" (acronym: OMRA) was launched in Slovenia in 2017.



## **Omro** programme partners



Znanstvenoraziskovalni center ZRC SAZU, Družbenomedicinski inštitut



Inštitut Karakter

In 2020-2022, the programme was implemented by an expanded team of 30 colleagues.



Društvo ALTRA - odbor za novosti v duševnem zdravju



Društvo Projekt Človek

OMRA programme is co-funded by:





## Increased need for mental health prevention and promotion programmes during the COVID-19 pandemic

- The COVID-19 pandemic and the epidemiological measures have also had a major impact on mental health;
- Around 10% of the population has experienced long-term distress;
- > WHO, 2022:
  - > the epidemiological picture of mood disorders worsened globally -
  - ➤ the occurrence of mental health problems such as **depression**, **anxiety disorders**, **experiencing excessive stress** and **post-traumatic stress disorder** was more frequent during the COVID-19 pandemic than in the period preceding it;
- Some epidemiological data show that the global prevalence of **depression increased** by **27.6%** and **anxiety by 25.6%** in just one year (2020), with the data for Europe (Central and East) and Central Asia showing a slightly worse picture;



# Main OBJECTIVE of the OMRA programme: to raise the level of mental health literacy

The construct refers to knowledge, beliefs and attitudes about mental disorders.

identification, treatment and prevention of mental disorders.

Knowledge empowers people with mental health problems and makes others aware that mental disorders are treatable, that most people recover from mental disorders, and that they can lead creative and fulfilling lives..



REDUCE SOCIAL STIGMA AND
SELF-STIGMA ->
SEEK HELP IN TIME



#### **OMRA** programme target groups

- general public
- professionals who have a lot of contact with people with mental health problems
- > vulnerable groups (18 years and older) who may be even less informed and motivated to act on mental health problems:
  - the elderly
  - rural populations (farmers, farmworkers)
  - people with mental health problems and
  - their families.





## OMRA tools to raise literacy on mood and personality disorders

- Online literacy platform OMRA (stress, depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, stigma, personality disorders);
- Publications: E-newsletter, manuals, guide, leaflet;
- Social media;
- Workshops, public lectures and round tables,
- Engagement in electronic and print media

The programme evaluation is multilevel and continuous.



Sculpture in Malmő, Sweden. Foto: NDH







# Online literacy platform OMRA www.omra.si

#### Social media:

@ProgramOmra







#### **Online workshops OMRA**



OMRA1: Stress makes you sick, make yourself strong!



OMRA2: The emotional merrygo-round of relationships: Let's recognise the personality disorders among us

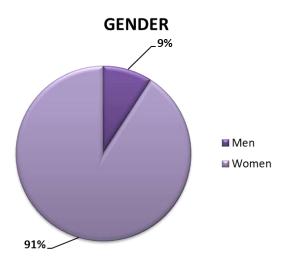


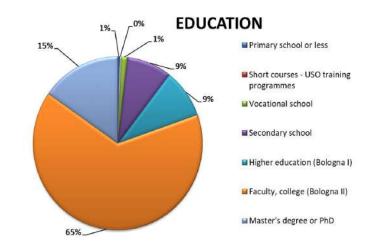
OMRA3: The power of conversation - the weakness of stigma

Workshop	N of implementations	N of registrants	N of participants
OMRA 1	32	1.323	951 (28%↓- in terms of registrants)

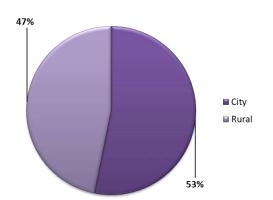


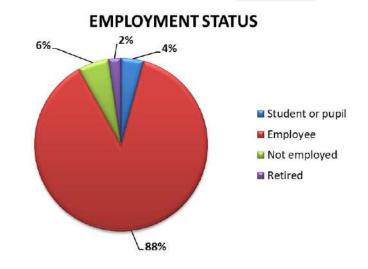
#### 32 OMRA online workshops delivered; 951 participants



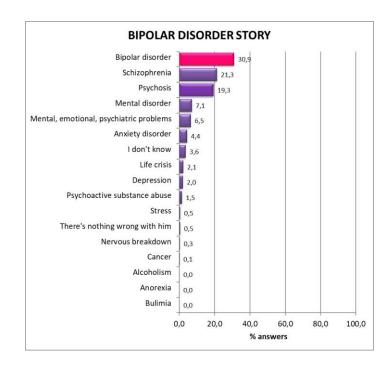


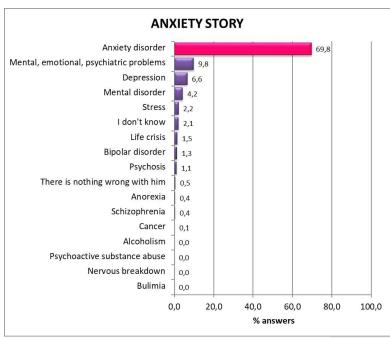
#### PLACE OF RESIDENCE

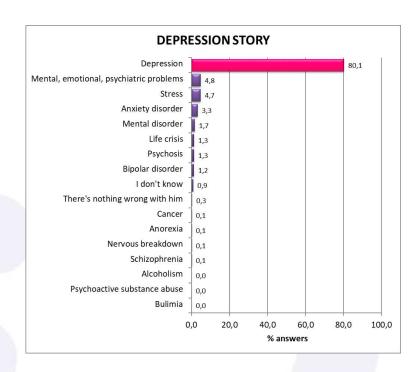










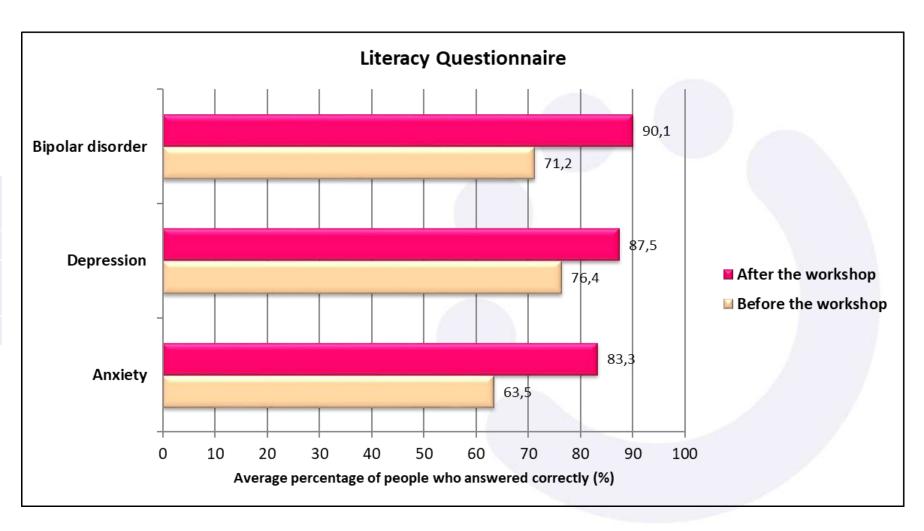


Identification of mood disorders using case vignettes



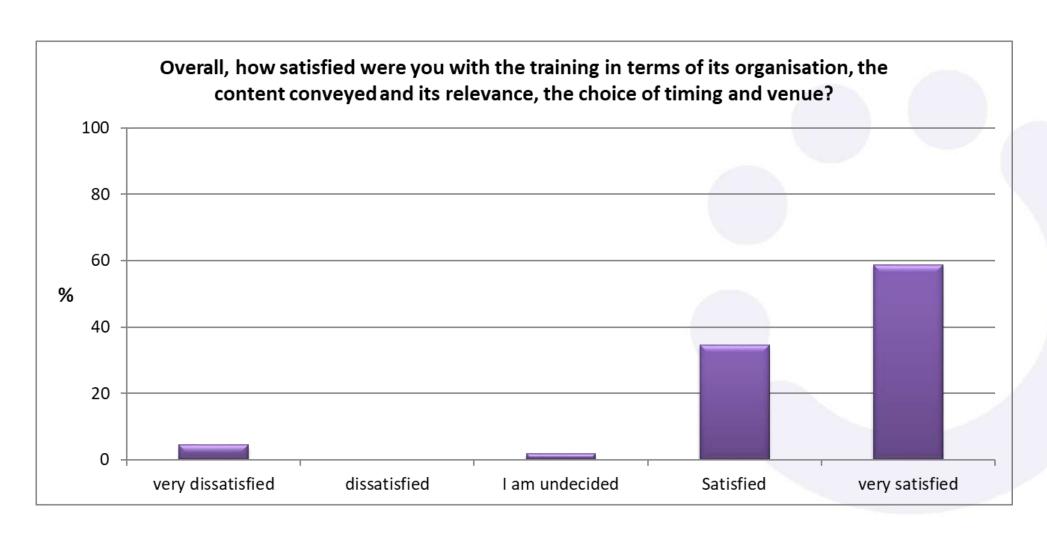
Literacy level before and after the workshop

Literacy Questionnaire	Difference in correct answers
DEPRESSION	11,0%
BIPOLAR DISORDER	18,9%
ANXIETY	19,8%





#### Satisfaction with the workshop





# After participating in the OMRA workshops, participants reported that ...

- have acquired more knowledge and understanding of mood disorders
- are more confident (lower self-stigma)
- are more empathetic, sensitive, and patient in dealing with their own problems and those of others
- respond more appropriately to people with problems
- · are better able to recognise past and present problems in themselves or others,
- give advice and (refer) themselves to specific professional help more confidently and with more authority,
- participate in more workshops like this one,
- **share and disseminate** information about the **OMRA** programme,
- advocate for regular, recurring training sessions

<sup>\*\*\*</sup>Based on interviews with participants in OMRA workshops.



### The OMRA programme - an example of good practice

> In the national report of WHO

(Looking back, looking forward: Rapid assessment of the mental health system in Slovenia; september 2020; p. 10-8)

➤ OMRA is highlighted as an example of best practice that contributes in an innovative way to improving mental health literacy in Slovenia.

https://dmi.zrc-sazu.si/sites/default/files/who\_porocilo\_-\_rapid\_assessment\_of\_the\_mental\_health\_system\_in\_slov enia\_.pdf WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION REGIONAL OFFICE FOR EUROPE 李

ORGANISATION MONDIALE DE LA SANTÉ
BUREAU RÉGIONAL DE L'EUROPE

WELTGESUNDHEITSORGANISATION
REGIONALBURO FÜR EUROPA

ВСЕМИРНАЯ ОРГАНИЗАЦИЯ ЗДРАВООХРАНЕНИЯ ЕВРОПЕЙСКОЕ РЕГИОНАЛЬНОЕ БЮРО

#### Looking back, looking forward:

#### Rapid assessment of the mental health system in Slovenia

Report of a virtual mission by the WHO Regional Office for Europe (September 2020)

#### Summary

Slovenia is in the process of reviewing its mental health system performance and planning the future development of services in the country. As part of this, the WHO Regional Office for Europe was requested by the Ministry of Health to undertake a mental health system assessment, with a view to identifying recent achievements as well as continuing gaps in service provision; this evaluation will inform the continuing implementation of the national mental health action resolution and plan for the period 2018-2028.

This report sets out the context for and findings of the mental health system assessment mission. Members of the mission team were Dr Dan Chisholm (Programme Manager for Mental Health), Dr Alga Rurane (WHO Representative to Slovenia) and Dr Francesco Amaddeo (WHO consultant), with support from other regional and country office colleagues. Owing to the prevailing COVID-19 situation in Europe in 2020, the mission was carried out virtually over the course of three working days in early-September, during which a wide range of national stakeholders were invited to share their views concerning past achievements as well as the current status and future needs of the mental health system and services.

Looking back at progress made since an earlier WHO mission in 2015, a key development has been the preparation and approval of a new Resolution on mental health for the period 2018-2028, which provides a comprehensive framework and strategy for multi-sectoral action on mental health service development in the country. There has been important progress made in implementing different elements of the Resolution as well as the recommendations of the earlier WHO mission, notably the establishment of several new community-based mental health centres. However, mental health and social care services are inequitably distributed, remain fragmented and mainly rely on institutional modes of service delivery. Accordingly, several opportunities exist for improved performance, including closer inter-sectoral planning and coordination, renewed prevention efforts, enhanced service access and further development of the mental health workforce.



## Investing in mental healt pays off!

Increased mental health literacy Identify mental health problems in time

Seek appropriate professional help Reduce economic burden of mental disorders

By investing in mental health prevention and promotion programmes for depression and anxiety alone, countries save four times as much.



#### Thank you for your attention!

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