



'Linking **2** Learn'

Linking-to-Learn meeting Mental Health February 2015

The programme organising team was made up of 4-5 individuals from CHGN Uttarakhand cluster and was led by Dr Kaaren Mathias.

The objectives for the workshop were to:

- Develop an understanding of a Christian response to mental illness
- Have basic knowledge of common and severe mental disorders
- Understand some simple ways to mainstream and include people with mental disorders in any community development programme, and
- Give participants some simple skills for increasing their own mental health.



The key resource person was Dr Kuruvilla George, a renown psychiatrist based in Melbourne (and pictured on the left), Australia. He led a range of sessions presenting a perspective on mental health built on the Bible as well as simple and helpful guidance on identification and referral of people with mental disorders.

Dr Swetha, a psuchiatriist from Herbertpur Christian Hospital, also gave teaching one afternoon on severe mental disorders. Mr David Abraham and Mr Raj Kamal joined others from the Burans CHGN-EHA partnership project in mental health to present different models and approaches in community mental health. It was great to have nearly 80 people attending on Day 1 and to overhear some of the following comments:

"We have quite a few people with mental troubles in our project. Now I have some ideas on what to do next".

"These brochures we have been provided with on epilepsy, depression, anxiety and all will be useful for us to use for teaching to community workers also"

"I like the poster saying 'One in Ten people in India has a mental disorder. Ask for help' "

"I was really moved by the session where people and caregivers affected by mental illness shared their experiences of mental health and how they also found some recovery with medicines".

The final session focused on ways we can all include people with mental disorders into our project. It was a useful L2L and I hope we can keep building in this area in the future.