



# '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.