

# Reimagining Global Mental Health through Openness, Equity, and Collaboration

## editorial

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With great pride and anticipation, we introduce the inaugural volume of *Mental Health Open*, a new international, open-access and open peer-review journal committed to advancing science, policy, and practice in mental health. Our journal arises from a shared responsibility to confront global mental health challenges with intellectual rigour, ethical clarity, and an unwavering commitment to openness and equity.

This Journal was born from a dream. It was about mental health becoming a global priority. It was about ending discrimination due to mental health conditions all around the world. It was about the accessibility of mental health services globally. It was about the rise of awareness and mental health promotion campaigns launched in every country worldwide.

We believe in our capacity to deal with global and local mental health gaps. We see many efforts to bridge them. But we also see how much more can be done, and we are committed to making a difference.

At this pivotal moment, when the mental health crisis has become a defining issue of our time, there is an urgent need to rethink how knowledge is produced, disseminated, and applied. *Mental Health Open* seeks to catalyse this transformation by serving as an inclusive, cross-disciplinary platform for mental health that bridges research, lived experience, and real-world application.

## Why Open?

Our commitment to openness is not just about access; it is about reconfiguring the values that shape the production of knowledge. We envision openness along several dimensions:

- **Open Access:** All content is freely accessible to readers worldwide, eliminating barriers to learning and engagement, particularly in low-resource settings.
- **Open Peer Review:** We embrace transparent, constructive, and accountable peer review processes. Reviewers disclose their identities, and we encourage signed reviews to foster collegial dialogue and knowledge exchange. Our goal is to make peer review not only a gatekeeping mechanism but also a space for mentoring and collaborative improvement.
- **Open Data and Reproducibility:** We promote data sharing and transparency as integral to ethical and credible science. Authors are encouraged to make anonymised datasets, research instruments, and analytic code publicly available, in line with FAIR data principles. This enhances reproducibility, fosters secondary analysis, and strengthens the integrity of the evidence base.

By embedding these principles into our editorial model, we aim to support a culture of mutual learning, integrity, and global participation.

## A Platform for Mental Health Policy and Systems Change

Mental health is increasingly recognised as a key determinant of human and societal wellbeing. Yet too often, policy responses remain fragmented, underfunded, or disconnected from research evidence and community needs. *Mental Health Open* explicitly positions itself as a forum for advancing evidence-informed policy dialogue and systems reform.

We welcome policy-relevant submissions that explore:

- Mental health integration into primary care and public health systems,
- Rights-based approaches and legal reform in mental health care,
- Sustainable financing and service delivery models,
- Intersectoral collaboration between health, education, employment, social welfare, and other sectors,
- Mental health workforce development, capacity building, and task-shifting,
- Policy evaluation, implementation science, and political economy of mental health.

We strongly encourage authors to share policy briefs, practice tools, and other actionable knowledge products alongside their academic articles to maximise relevance and real-world impact.

## Who and What We Publish

*Mental Health Open* seeks to amplify a wide range of voices, particularly those underrepresented in mainstream academic publishing. We prioritise research that is interdisciplinary, participatory, and socially engaged. Our scope includes, but is not limited to:

- Community mental health and user-led innovations,
- Mental health of children, adolescents, and families,
- Psychosocial support in humanitarian and crisis contexts,



- Intersectionality, gender equity, and culturally safe practices,
- Digital and AI-based mental health interventions,
- Ethics, rights, and the lived experience of mental distress.

We are open to various formats, including original research articles, reviews, perspectives, case studies, methods papers, and artistic or narrative contributions that challenge traditional academic boundaries.

## Our First Volume and the Road Ahead

The contributions in our first volume will reflect the diversity and dynamism of the global mental health field, from innovations in school-based promotion and trauma-informed practice to grassroots mental health advocacy and emerging policy models.

As we move forward, our aspiration is not just to grow in size and reputation, but to remain grounded in our values. We envision *Mental Health Open* as a scholarly commons, where researchers, practitioners, policymakers, people with lived experience, and communities co-create the future of mental health research and action.

## With Gratitude and Invitation

We thank our inaugural authors, reviewers, and editorial board members who will help us bring this journal to life (and this might be you, welcome to apply). Your trust and labour are the foundation upon which we build.

To all our future readers and contributors: whether you are a researcher, activist, clinician, policymaker, student, or person with lived experience, we welcome your knowledge, your voice, and your vision. Let us work together to advance mental health as a universal right and a global public good.

## Welcome to Mental Health Open!