

**Mental Health Policy and  
Service Guidance Package**

# PLANNING AND BUDGETING TO DELIVER SERVICES FOR MENTAL HEALTH

*“Rational planning and budgeting  
can help build effective mental health  
services. Methods are now available  
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World Health Organization, 2003

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#### WHO Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

Planning and budgeting to deliver services for mental health.  
(Mental health policy and service guidance package)

1. Mental health services - organization and administration
2. Health services needs and demand
3. Financial management
4. Health planning guidelines I. World Health Organization II. Series.

ISBN 92 4 154596 8

(NLM classification: WM 30)

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Printed in Singapore

## Acknowledgements

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The Mental Health Policy and Service Guidance Package was produced under the direction of Dr Michelle Funk, Coordinator, Mental Health Policy and Service Development, and supervised by Dr Benedetto Saraceno, Director, Department of Mental Health and Substance Dependence, World Health Organization.

The World Health Organization gratefully thanks Dr Crick Lund, University of Cape Town, Observatory, Republic of South Africa who prepared this module, with contributions from Professor Alan J. Flisher, University of Cape Town, Observatory, Republic of South Africa and Professor Andrew Green, The Nuffield Institute for Health, University of Leeds. Professor Martin Knapp, London School of Economics and Political Science, drafted a background document that was used in the preparation of the module.

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**WHO also gratefully thanks the following people for their expert opinion and technical input to this module:**

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WHO also wishes to acknowledge the generous financial support of the Governments of Australia, Finland, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, and Norway, as well as the Eli Lilly and Company Foundation and the Johnson and Johnson Corporate Social Responsibility, Europe.



*"Rational planning and budgeting  
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services. Methods are now available  
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This module is part of the WHO Mental Health Policy and Service guidance package, which provides practical information to assist countries to improve the mental health of their populations.

### **What is the purpose of the guidance package?**

The purpose of the guidance package is to assist policy-makers and planners to:

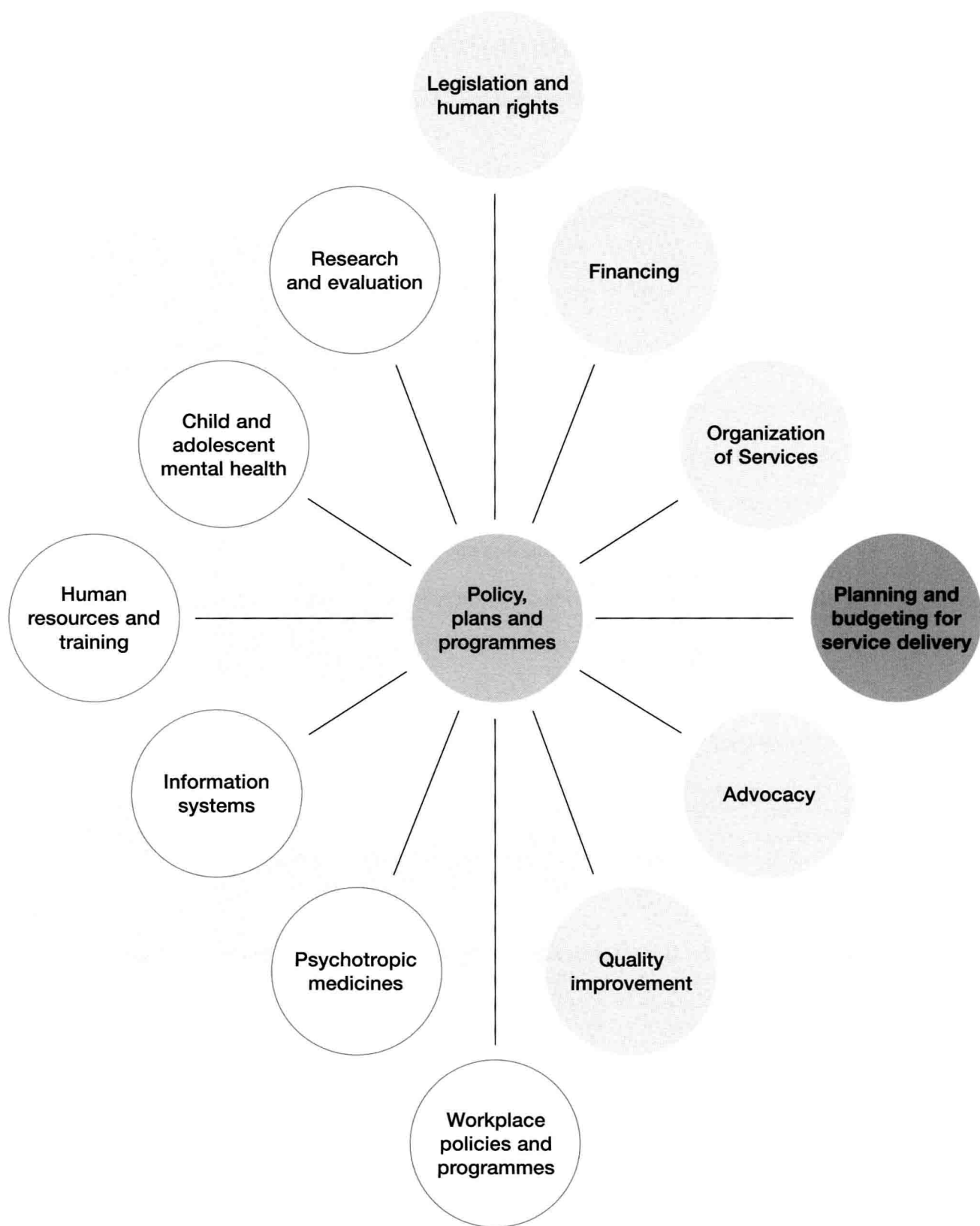
- develop policies and comprehensive strategies for improving the mental health of populations;
- use existing resources to achieve the greatest possible benefits;
- provide effective services to those in need;
- assist the reintegration of persons with mental disorders into all aspects of community life, thus improving their overall quality of life.

### **What is in the package?**

The package consists of a series of interrelated user-friendly modules that are designed to address the wide variety of needs and priorities in policy development and service planning. The topic of each module represents a core aspect of mental health. The starting point is the module entitled The Mental Health Context, which outlines the global context of mental health and summarizes the content of all the modules. This module should give readers an understanding of the global context of mental health, and should enable them to select specific modules that will be useful to them in their own situations. Mental Health Policy, Plans and Programmes is a central module, providing detailed information about the process of developing policy and implementing it through plans and programmes. Following a reading of this module, countries may wish to focus on specific aspects of mental health covered in other modules.

The guidance package includes the following modules:

- > The Mental Health Context
- > Mental Health Policy, Plans and Programmes
- > Mental Health Financing
- > Mental Health Legislation and Human Rights
- > Advocacy for Mental Health
- > Organization of Services for Mental Health
- > Quality Improvement for Mental Health
- > Planning and Budgeting to Deliver Services for Mental Health



still to be developed

The following modules are not yet available but will be included in the final guidance package:

- > Improving Access and Use of Psychotropic Medicines
- > Mental Health Information Systems
- > Human Resources and Training for Mental Health
- > Child and Adolescent Mental Health
- > Research and Evaluation of Mental Health Policy and Services
- > Workplace Mental Health Policies and Programmes

### **Who is the guidance package for?**

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The modules will be of interest to:

- policy-makers and health planners;
- government departments at federal, state/regional and local levels;
- mental health professionals;
- groups representing people with mental disorders;
- representatives or associations of families and carers of people with mental disorders;
- advocacy organizations representing the interests of people with mental disorders and their relatives and families;
- nongovernmental organizations involved or interested in the provision of mental health services.

### **How to use the modules**

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- They can be used **individually or as a package**. They are cross-referenced with each other for ease of use. Countries may wish to go through each of the modules systematically or may use a specific module when the emphasis is on a particular area of mental health. For example, countries wishing to address mental health legislation may find the module entitled Mental Health Legislation and Human Rights useful for this purpose.
- They can be used as a **training package** for mental health policy-makers, planners and others involved in organizing, delivering and funding mental health services. They can be used as educational materials in university or college courses. Professional organizations may choose to use the package as an aid to training for persons working in mental health.
- They can be used as a framework for **technical consultancy** by a wide range of international and national organizations that provide support to countries wishing to reform their mental health policy and/or services.
- They can be used as **advocacy tools** by consumer, family and advocacy organizations. The modules contain useful information for public education and for increasing awareness among politicians, opinion-makers, other health professionals and the general public about mental disorders and mental health services.

## **Format of the modules**

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Each module clearly outlines its aims and the target audience for which it is intended. The modules are set out in a step-by-step format in order to assist countries to use and implement the guidance, which is not intended to be prescriptive or to be interpreted in a rigid way. Instead, countries are encouraged to adapt the material according to their own needs and circumstances. Practical examples from specific countries are used to illustrate particular aspects throughout the modules.

There is extensive cross-referencing between the modules. Readers of one module may need to consult another (as indicated in the text) should they wish further guidance.

All the modules should be read in the light of WHO's policy of providing most mental health care through general health services and community settings. Mental health is necessarily an intersectoral issue involving the fields of education, employment, housing, social services and the criminal justice system. Serious consultation with consumer and family organizations is essential in connection with the development of policy and the delivery of services.

Dr Michelle Funk

Dr Benedetto Saraceno

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Mental health service planners, managers and service providers are often faced with the following questions. What physical and human resources are required to deliver a mental health service? What facilities, staff and medication does a local mental health service need to provide care that is effective, efficient and of acceptable quality? How can mental health services be delivered when financial resources are limited, and how much money is needed for a mental health service?

Unfortunately, answering these questions is not easy. There are significant differences between countries in respect of the mental health resources available to them. Moreover, demands for services vary between countries and there are unique cultural expressions of need in some countries. The economic context of a country frequently shapes the mental health resources that are available.

For these reasons it is impossible to recommend a minimum level of care or a global norm, such as a minimum number of beds or staff. Apart from being inappropriate for countries' specific needs, recommending general figures is of limited value as these are often taken out of context.

Consequently, countries are faced with having to provide their own answers to these questions. This can be done through careful planning based on a thorough assessment of local needs and existing services.

The purpose of this module is to set out, in a clear, rational manner, a model for assessing a local population's mental health care needs and for planning services accordingly. In doing so the module aims to provide countries with a set of planning and budgeting tools that can assist with the delivery of mental health services. A pragmatic approach to service planning is presented, making use of the best available information. All relevant stakeholders are taken into account.

The tools are set out in a series of four planning steps, and examples from specific countries are given.

Step A: Situation analysis of current mental health services and service funding.

Step B: Assessment of needs for mental health services.

Step C: Target-setting for mental health services.

Step D: Implementation of service targets through budget management, monitoring and evaluation.

The planning and budgeting process is a cycle. As new information on service developments, utilization and outcomes emerges, changes can be made to the situation analysis, the needs assessment and the subsequent planning.

### **Step A. Situation analysis**

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#### **Task 1. Identify the *population* to be served**

- Mental health service planners or managers should begin by identifying the population or catchment area to be served by the mental health system.
- Specific characteristics of the population, such as age distribution, population density, level of social deprivation and presence of refugees should be indicated so that special needs can be anticipated.

#### **Task 2. Review the *context* of mental health care**

- Mental health service managers or planners have to understand the local context of mental health care.
- This may include a range of information, relating, for instance, to the history of mental health services in the area concerned, the current policy on mental health, the economic circumstances and the cultural background. Much of this information may be qualitative in nature.

#### **Task 3. *Consult* with all relevant stakeholders**

- Consultation with all stakeholders in mental health is an essential part of planning.
- Planners should identify the key stakeholders and ensure that they are consulted at the relevant stages of the planning process.
- Consultation over differing service priorities and cultural interpretations of mental health problems is particularly important.
- Involving stakeholders in both the design and implementation of service plans can lead to improved data quality, improved cooperation in the implementation of service plans, decision-making informed by reliable data, and increased public accountability.

#### **Task 4. Identify responsibility for the mental health *budget* and *plan***

- Mental health service managers should ascertain the extent of their own responsibility for the mental health budget and plan. This includes understanding the extent and limits of the available budget, such as its integration with general health and other sectors.
- Where possible, changes should be made which enable effective planning and make the best use of available skills.
- Other key stakeholders who authorize the size and deployment of the mental health budget should be identified.
- It is important to identify key forums and targets for negotiation over the mental health budget with a view to future service development.

#### **Task 5. Review current *public sector service resources***

- The next task is to review the services that exist and the service resources that are currently available in the public sector.
- This requires the use of service indicators to summarize information on current service resources, such as staff, beds, facilities and medications.
- The review should cover all aspects of the provision of mental health services in the public sector, whether in specialist services or in services integrated into general health care, e.g. primary care.