



#DoYourShare

to promote Mental Health

How **health care providers** can help to reduce stigma and discrimination.

Stigma can be worse than the disease itself

Many people with mental health conditions, do not ask for help because of their fear of stigma and discrimination. These **social, cultural,** and **structural** stigmas often create anxieties that worsen the underlying condition.

Do your share to break the cycle.

Understanding Stigma

Stigma is a social phenomenon that involves negative attitudes (prejudices) or beliefs (stereotypes) about others based on defining characteristics such as sexuality or health conditions. Stigma and the process of stigmatization consists of identifying and labeling a “difference,” linking a labeled person to undesirable characteristics, and separating “them” from “us”.

Health-related **stigma**

happens when people have or are associated with a specific health condition perceived as undesirable.

Health-related **discrimination**

is an action or decision that treats a person, or a group differently based on a health condition, disease, or another health-related issue. It may occur in the workplace, health care, education, housing, and other settings.



PAHO





Levels of stigma:

Individual level

A person's responses to facing or experiencing stigma, including concealment and disclosure, internalization, and stigma consciousness.

Interpersonal level

Discrimination as expressed by one person toward another, manifesting in ways such as lack of respect, devaluation, and dehumanization.

Structural level

Cultural norms, and institutional policies that constrain the opportunities, resources, and well-being of the person with lived experience.

Consequences of Stigma and Discrimination:

- Downplaying of symptoms
- Delayed diagnosis and treatment
- Poor adherence to treatment
- Increased levels of anxiety
- Increased risk of illness and death

How to Support Someone with a Mental Health Condition:

- Ask whether they would like your support
- Talk with them directly, not with their friends or family members
- Listen earnestly and avoid interrupting them
- Don't assume that you understand. Clarify what you've understood by asking
- Display kindness, respect and understanding



When you **#DoYourShare**, you reduce stigma and contribute to creating an environment where people can get the help they need to live with their mental health condition.

