

# Mental Health in HIV

*Podgorica, Montenegro*

Saturday 17th September 2022



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“ This meeting was extremely educational in nature. A lot has been done to connect and interact with the participants who, in their daily work, take part in raising the quality of mental health of people living with HIV. Thank you to our colleagues and friends from England for making this possible and improving our work. ”

*Prof Brankica Dupanovic - Host*



“ This meeting has contributed to form professional links between clinicians from Montenegro and UK and strengthened those in-country. These clinical connections should help to enhance the care of HIV patients with common but complex mental health issues curriculum” *Dr Nora Turjanski, Consultant psychiatrist*

# Mental Health in HIV

Hotel Ramada Podgorica, Bulevar Save Kovačevića 74

81000 Podgorica, Montenegro

## Saturday 17th September 2022

<b>08:30 -09:00</b>	Registration and Coffee	
<b>09:00-09:15</b>	<b>Welcome and introduction to HIV</b>	<i>Mike Youle</i>
<b>09:00-09:30</b>	<b>Mental Health and HIV in Montenegro</b>	<i>Brankica / Snezana</i>
<b>09:30-10:00</b>	<b>Comorbid psychiatric disorders</b>	<i>Nora Turjanski</i>
<b>10:00-10:30</b>	<b>Psychological assessment in HIV</b>	<i>Shimu Khamlichi</i>
<b>10:30-11:00</b>	Coffee break	
<b>11:00-11:30</b>	<b>Treatment of psychiatric disorders in HIV</b>	<i>Nora Turjanski</i>
<b>11:30-12:00</b>	<b>Overview of psychological treatment</b>	<i>Sophie Rae</i>
<b>12:00-12:30</b>	<b>Deconstructing stigma and fear of HIV</b>	<i>Mike Youle</i>
<b>12.30-13:30</b>	Lunch	
<b>13:30-14.00</b>	<b>Treating Specific HIV-Related Mental Health Issues</b>	<i>Shimu &amp; Sophie</i>
<b>14:00-14:45</b>	<b>Teaching Basic Psychological Tools: including exercises</b>	<i>Shimu &amp; Sophie</i>
<b>14:45-15:00</b>	<b>Questions and close</b>	<i>Panel</i>



## JUSTRI Mental Health in HIV

Podgorica, Montenegro 17th September 2022

The event was held in the capital of Montenegro with the support and participation of two local organising HIV doctors, Prof Brankica Dupanovic and Dr Snezana Dragas, from the Clinical Center of Montenegro, which houses the main HIV service in the country.

This our second training in mental health and HIV, following our successful event in Novi Sad, Serbia in 2018, <http://justri.org/psychiatry-psychology-training-november-2018>, where we invited teams from other centres in Serbia, Bosnia, Montenegro, Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia; making it the largest meeting to discuss these issues ever to be held in the Balkans, which was the catalyst for the present meeting.

For this training, the linkage with the in-country HIV doctors, whom we know very well, served to make the process simple, and they helped to promote the event through their own local institutions and colleagues.



The meeting was held at the Hotel Ramada, Podgorica and there were 33 attendees who included, psychiatrists, psychologists, neurologists, infectious disease/HIV doctors and nurses, social workers, and representatives of the Montenegrin HIV NGO. The meeting was very lively, and the participants were well engaged and asked insightful, pertinent



“ There is much value to be given in building connections across the UK and Montenegro as professionals within HIV care. The hope is that these connections will allow for continued sharing of expertise and experience, such as the benefits of a multi-disciplinary approach when working to address the mental health difficulties commonly experienced amongst PLWH.” *Dr Sophie Rae, Psychologist*

questions. The speakers worked with the audience to ensure that they got the best of information and ways of working, and above all stressed that in mental health and HIV, team working and developing professional relationships is vital for the benefit of patients with these stigmatised conditions. The slides from the meeting

with pictures, comments and more details are at <http://www.justri.org/> This project cemented our belief that localised and specific trainings on mental health in HIV can be highly effective at providing information on the diagnosis, treatment, and care of those with mental health issues also living with HIV. They also strengthen



“ This meeting helped us so much; every lecture was helpful and every speaker was interesting and educational. We learned the importance of addressing Mental Health in HIV patients and to fight against stigma and discrimination, the importance of psychology, psychiatric and support from other institutions and work as a team when we treat our patients.” *Dr Snezana Dragas, Host*

**“ For me, this meeting has a massive impact on the way I am approaching problems. It was encouraging to hear experiences and methods helping people who live with HIV and professionals working with them.**

The most significant insight was that the problems and challenges are still present, even in the first world countries, and we must find creative ways to approach them. This insight helped me to understand the magnitude of this problem and to put it in perspective. Now I feel more empowered and less isolated in this fight for good mental health for people who live with HIV.

In my experience, I feel privileged to have an opportunity like this meeting to listen about mental health and life issues from people with such unique experiences. I appreciate their wisdom and knowledge so much, and I will incorporate in my practice much of their shared knowledge.

Thank you! I hope to see you soon and learn from your amazing team of professionals and wise humans.”

*Al-Ammar Kašić, Psychologist and Psychotherapist*

the engagement, interaction and cohesion of services for both these conditions, stigma against both being widespread in the community but also within a high proportion of health care workers. It is vital to engage a wide range of medical and allied health practitioners, especially mental health professionals to think about HIV, whatever their speciality or role is. We believe this type of training is relevant in many settings and we will look to expand our reach to mental health and HIV services in other countries. We already have plans

for a further training in Southeast Europe in 2023 and we believe that there is a pressing need in the region to support integrated and cohesive care for people with mental health conditions who also have HIV.



**“ It was very useful to learn about the delivery of HIV services in Montenegro and the gaps within. The training was engaging, and ideas were well shared. I found it useful to attend as a facilitator and to hear of the challenges that exist across all HIV services (in Europe and London). Opening better communications between healthcare professionals and patients and reducing stigma when working with patients with mental health problems are great ideas to take away from the training.”**

*Dr Shimu Khamlichi, Clinical Psychologist*

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## Evaluation Summary

### 1. How well did the meeting meet your expectations?

5 Well exceeded expectations — 1 Did not meet expectations

AVERAGE  
**4.9**

### 2. How would you rate the effectiveness of the following sessions?

5 Very effective — 1 Not effective

LECTURES:

**4.8**  
AVERAGE

WORKSHOPS:

**4.7**  
AVERAGE

CASE PRESENTATIONS:

**4.7**  
AVERAGE

### 3. Please let us know which speakers you found helpful, which less so, and any additional subjects we should have covered

- “ I love all of them and their expertise. Nora - the wise one; Shimu - the clear one, Mike - the radiant one; Sophie - the calm one.
- “ Every lecture was helpful!
- “ Every speaker was interesting on its own. Thank you.
- “ I think I heard useful information from everyone, all very eloquent and informative. However, my biggest mark goes to Shimu; her energy is amazing!
- “ Everyone was very informative, Shimu most helpful.
- “ Hvala – Thank you
- “ Every speaker was helpful and amazing
- “ Very useful, especially techniques and approach. Thanks to you all!
- “ It was all great
- “ Everyone speaks very helpful and covered all the things which is interest to me. But, little bit, Shimu presentation was the most helpful for my work. Thank you for your time and energy
- “ I’m psychologist so I found Shimu and Nora very useful (technics)
- “ All good
- “ All the speakers were pretty great. My personal favourite was Sophie. Mike was super funny, aside from that it was great to hear his life story.
- “ The lectures were really good. We are so thankful for having us.
- “ I think treatment of psychiatric disorders very helpful lesson because we hear important information about side effects, interaction of psychiatric therapy

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## 4. How will this meeting help you in your day-to-day work? (comments only)

- “ This meeting help us very much in our work as we understand that we have to work as team health professionals when we treat our patients
- “ In dealing with our HIV patients, understanding them
- “ I guess in understanding our HIV+ patients a little better
- “ I learned psychological techniques
- “ To prepare some ideas to help patient before referral to specialist clinic
- “ It will help me a lot in my future work!
- “ It will help me with my consultations
- “ Addressing mental health in HIV patients, psychology, and psychiatric support
- “ I'll use the information I found out today in my everyday job with patients and NGO
- “ I work with students so teaching them to beat stigma and discrimination will definitely be useful
- “ Improve communication with co-workers
- “ Think more about mental health of our patients
- “ It is relaxing and revealing to see that no matter when we work we are confronting and solving the same issues

## 5. What is your overall assessment of the meeting?

5 Very effective/Excellent — 1 Not effective/Poor

AVERAGE  
**5.0**

- “ I want more and continual co-operation with JUSTRI and clinicians at Royal Free Hospital
- “ Excellent!
- “ Excellent – first time integration of Mental Health in HIV

## 6. Please give suggestions for how future meetings might meet your training needs (comments only)

- “ About metabolic syndrome, co-morbidities and HIV side effects of therapy
- “ We want more meetings like this.
- “ We want more!
- “ Maybe 2 days instead of 1, to practise things
- “ This meeting was good and educational, a lot or practical. In future more workshops
- “ More practical/interactive bits
- “ More of the examples of how to question our patients
- “ Better management o call health workers in MNE, Official letters to management of Health Institutions, call in GP, psychologist, psychiatrist and activist community. Minimum two days, sorry for my English, I hope you understand this
- “ I would appreciate more workshops, but overall, I appreciate all lecture holders we so open to questions. Thank you

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