



The Manthan Study: Promoting mental health and wellbeing among transgender people in New Delhi using a peer support approach – September 2024

The George Institute
for Global Health

Facts:

- There are over 480,000 trans people in India – 60% have never attended schools, 96% are denied jobs, and 99% of trans people have suffered social rejection on more than one occasion.
- 48% of trans people in India suffer from mental disorders compared to 14% of the cisgender population.
- According to a recent study, 43% of trans women experience moderate to severe depression, 48% suffer from psychiatric disorders and nearly 50% have attempted suicide at least once.

Project Cycle:
2024–2025

Partners:
The George Institute for Global Health
TWEET Foundation

Supporters:
The George Institute for Global Health
Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR)

Principal Investigator:
Dr. Yatirajula Kanaka Sandhya
Prof. Pallab K Maulik

Contact:

To find out more about this project and its principal investigators or The George Institute please contact Tina Wall +61 410 411 983 or twall@georgeinstitute.org.au

Background:

Transgender people in India experience a significantly higher prevalence of mental health challenges compared to the general population. These challenges often stem from societal stigma, discrimination, and lack of access to appropriate healthcare services.

Despite this heightened vulnerability, research focusing on the mental health needs of transgender people in India remains limited.

Understanding and addressing these issues are crucial for promoting their overall wellbeing and ensuring equitable access to mental health support.

The United Nations has highlighted mental health as a critical global priority, emphasising its pivotal role in sustainable development. Addressing mental illness is not only essential for improving individual health outcomes but also for fostering inclusive societies and achieving broader developmental goals.

Aims:

To undertake a preliminary evaluation of a peer support model and explore its effects on anxiety, depression, suicide/self-harm and psychological wellbeing.

To assess the acceptability of the peer support model and identify facilitating and impeding factors.

Methods:

A Trans Advisory Group (TAG) has been established to co-create a peer support model tailored to the unique needs and experiences of transgender persons.

Transgender participants enrolled in the study will be organised into trans peer support groups that will help build resilience to deal with everyday challenges and provide safe spaces for mutual support and empowerment.

Trans peer leaders will be trained to facilitate the peer support model within their respective groups, thereby ensuring that the intervention is led by the transgender community.

Impact:

- To establish a robust trans-led intervention model to address depression and anxiety and promote mental health among transgender people, demonstrating its feasibility and acceptability within the community.
- Reductions in anxiety, depression and self-harm/suicide rates are anticipated through the research intervention, alongside enhancements in overall mental wellbeing indicators.

The George Institute For Global Health:

We're improving the lives of millions of people worldwide through innovative health research. Working across a broad health landscape, the Institute conducts clinical, population and health system research aimed at changing health practice and policy worldwide.