



INVESTING IN MENTAL HEALTH

World Mental Health Day 2020



PAHO

World Mental Health Day 2020

- World Mental Health Day is observed on **10 October** every year.
- The overall objective is raising awareness of mental health issues around the world and mobilizing efforts in support of mental health.
- For this year's World Mental Health Day, WHO, together with partner organizations, United for Global Mental Health and the World Federation for Mental Health, is calling for a **massive scale-up in investment in mental health.**

Investing in Mental Health: What and Who?

- In addition to financial investment, investing in mental health can also refer to the ways in which we prioritize and advocate for mental health.
- Increasing investment in mental health will require **intersectoral collaboration**, among many different actors, including:
 - governments (Ministries of health, education, social development, among others);
 - policy makers;
 - donors (nonprofits, foundations, private);
 - the media

Investing in Mental Health: How?

What can policy makers do?

- Reallocate investment from large hospitals to primary health care and community mental health care.
- Identify new resources for mental health, e.g. increasing tax on alcohol and tobacco may increase resources for health.
- Foster inter-sectoral collaboration.

What can donors do?

- Include mental health in all health-related programs.
- Advocate for policies that promote the rights of people with mental health conditions.
- Support the development and functioning of services in primary care and the community.

Investing in Mental Health: How?

What can health care providers do?

- Respect the dignity and promote the rights of people with mental disorders.
- Ensure provision of good quality mental health care within the health care system and community.

What can individuals do?

- Promote positive attitudes, non-discrimination, and equal opportunities for people with mental health conditions.
- Educate yourself and raise awareness about mental health and human rights issues.
- Support and mobilize people in your communities to advocate for change.
- Educate yourself and raise awareness about mental health and human rights issues.
- Advocate for increased funding for mental health.

Mental Health Spending: What is Recommended?

- The WHO recommends that health spending allocation should be **in proportion to the health burden**, and that there should be parity between physical and mental aspects of health care.
- International guidelines and evidence indicate that services for mental health conditions should aim at:
 - caring for people in the community;
 - providing integrated services for mental illness in primary care or general hospitals;
 - community treatment plus social support for severely affected individuals.

Global Mental Health Spending

- Median government mental health expenditure is less than 2.0% of total government health expenditure globally.
- Government expenditure on mental health is less than 1 US\$ per capita in low and lower middle-income countries whereas high-income countries spend more than US\$ 80.
- Most of the reported expenditure is allocated to mental hospitals in particular, except in high income countries where less than 43% of spending is on mental hospitals.

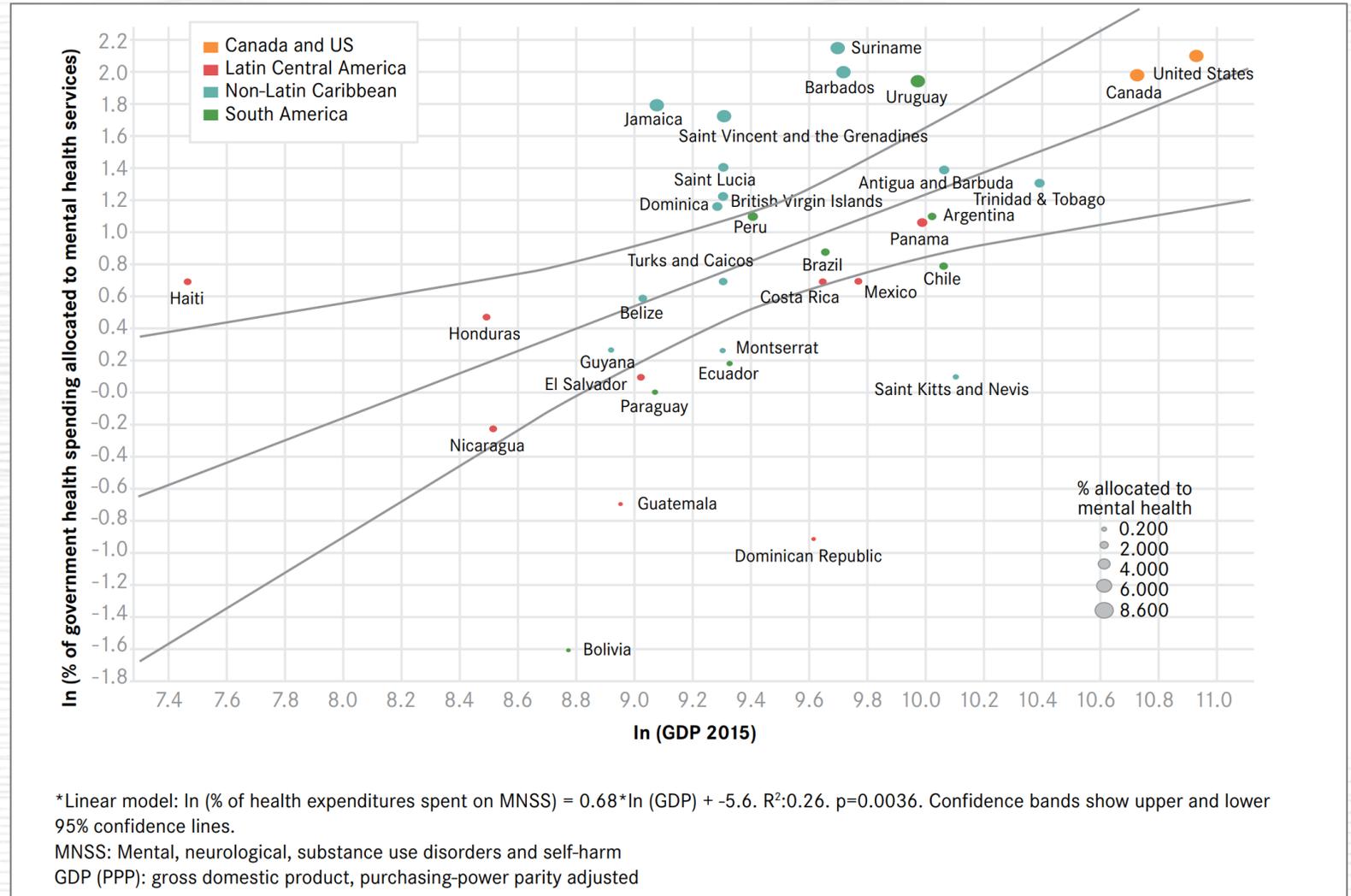
Source: WHO, Mental Health Atlas (2017).

Mental Health Spending in the Americas

- In the Americas, median spending in mental health services stands at **2.0%** of total government health spending, varying greatly by country.
- However mental, neurologic, substance use disorders and suicide in the Region account for **19% of total disability-adjusted life years (DALYs)** and **34% of total years lived with disability (YLDs)**.
- The **median ratio of mental illness burden to expenditure on mental health is 6.1** (the proportion of burden attributable to mental disorders is 6 times the proportion of health funds allocated to mental health), ranging from a burden that is 1.8 to 72 times the reported spending.

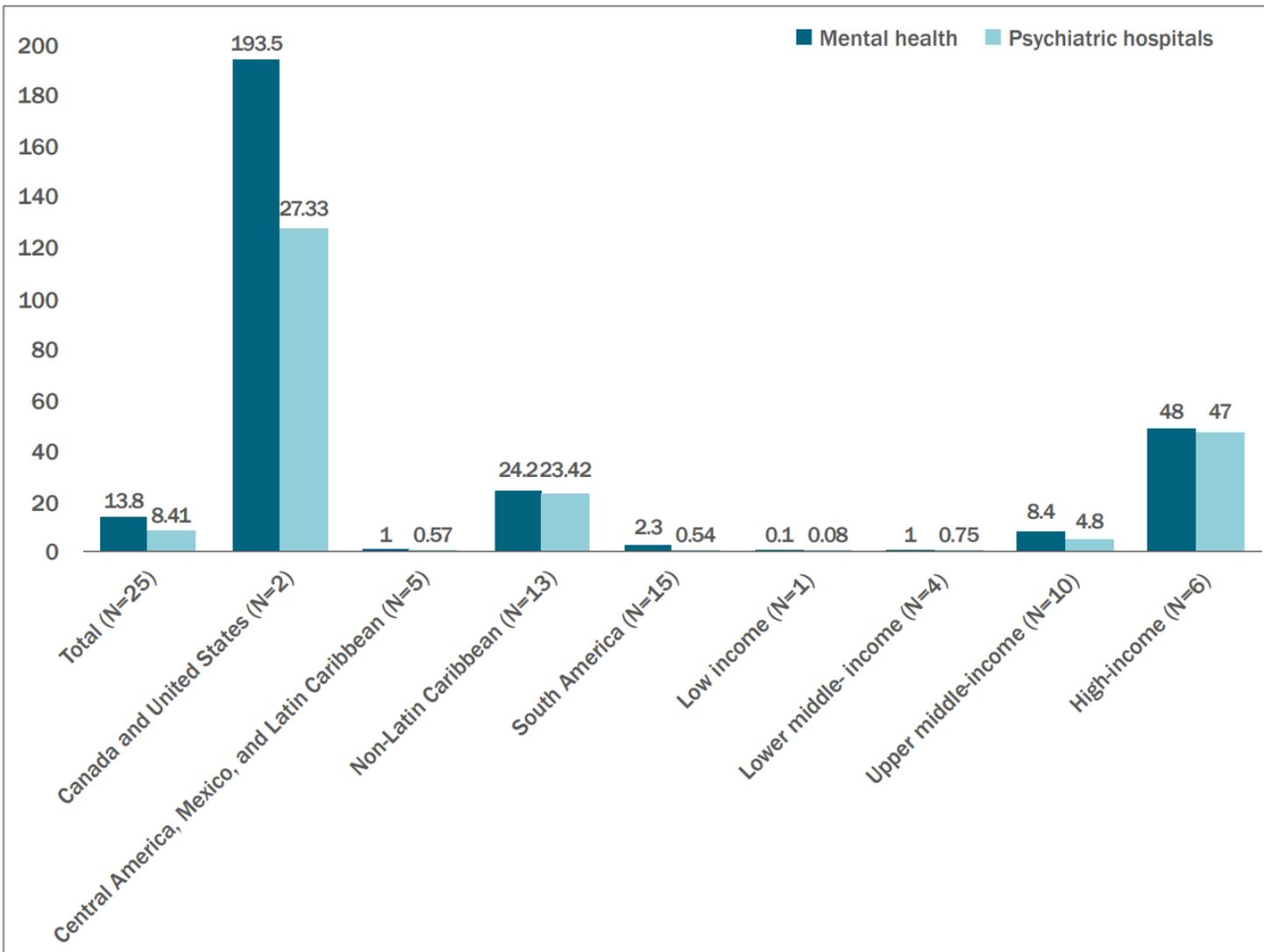
Source: PAHO, The Burden of Mental Disorders in the Region of the Americas 2018.

Mental health spending vs. per-capita GDP (PPP)* in the Americas



Source: PAHO, The Burden of Mental Disorders in the Region of the Americas 2018.

Allocation of Mental Health Spending in the Americas



Over 60% of government health spending in the Region which is allocated to mental health goes towards psychiatric hospitals.

Median per capita spending on mental health and on psychiatric hospitals, by subregion and income group (US\$ [2017])

Source: PAHO, Atlas of Mental Health of the Americas (2017).

Why Invest in Mental Health?

Human Rights Protection:

- Access to mental health care is a fundamental human right, recognized by the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).
- Yet in the Americas, the treatment gap can reach as high as 80% for people with mental health and substance use conditions.

Public Health and Economic Burden:

- Mental, neurological and substance use disorders are major contributors to morbidity and premature mortality throughout the world.
- In 2010, the global cost of mental disorders was estimated to be approximately US\$2.5 trillion; by 2030, that figure is projected to go up by 240%, to US\$6.0 trillion.

Why Invest in Mental Health?

Cost and Cost-Effectiveness:

- There is a substantial return on investment in mental health.
- Every US\$ 1 invested in scaling up treatment for depression and anxiety leads to a return of US\$ 4 in better health and ability to work.

Equitable Access and Financial Protection:

- Investment improves equitable access and fairness in financial contribution to essential mental health services.
- This helps us to move closer to Universal Health Coverage.

Mental Health Investing and COVID-19

- Evidence shows that the COVID-19 pandemic has likely led to an increase in people developing new mental health and substance use conditions as well to a worsening or relapse in those with pre-existing conditions.
- Mental health systems, which were already under-resourced prior to COVID-19, may now find themselves even more strained as they face a greater demand for services and existing funding is directed elsewhere.
- Investing more in mental health can help countries to be prepared for the unexpected impacts of emergencies and disasters, which take a high toll on mental health systems and services.

Key Takeaway Messages

- There is a large imbalance between the burden of mental health conditions in the Americas and the amount of government spending allocated to mental health.
- The majority of mental health spending in the Region still goes towards psychiatric hospitals, and not to community-based services and care.
- Investing more in mental health is essential to protecting human rights, reducing the treatment gap, and achieving Universal Health Coverage.
- Investing in mental health produces significant return.
- To prepare ourselves to manage crises such as COVID-19, we must invest more in mental health.

Technical Resources

- Atlas of Mental Health of the Americas (2017): <https://iris.paho.org/handle/10665.2/49664>
- The Burden of Mental Disorders in the Region of the Americas 2018: <https://iris.paho.org/handle/10665.2/49578>
- Investing in Mental Health: Evidence for Action (2013): https://www.who.int/mental_health/publications/financing/investing_in_mh_2013/en/
- Investing in Mental Health (2003): <https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/42823>

Technical Resources

- Care for Mental Conditions in Jamaica: The Case for Investment. Evaluating the Return on Investment of Scaling Up Treatment for Depression, Anxiety, and Psychosis (2020): <https://www.paho.org/en/documents/care-mental-health-conditions-jamaica-case-investment-evaluating-return-investment>
- Out of the Shadows: Making mental health a global development priority: <https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/270131468187759113/out-of-the-shadows-making-mental-health-a-global-development-priority>