



The mhGAP refresher training in Kohat

To integrate mental healthcare in primary care, nearly 40 primary care physicians in Kohat were trained to manage common mental disorders 5 months back. Nearly half of the trained physicians have been submitting cases through mhGAP-HIG-PK mobile application and seeking supervision. A 3-day refresher training workshop was conducted for these physicians from 6th - 8th April, 2026.

The training workshop was supported by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) through their implementing partners Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and International Medical Corps, in Pakistan.

The District Health Officer Kohat, Dr. Nasir Hassan and the Medical Superintendent of the DHQ Hospital, Dr. Syed Tahir Ali Shah, also participated and offered their wholehearted support for the initiative. Dr. Syed Tahir shared an encouraging development that they have appointed two psychiatrists and a psychologist at the DHQ Hospital and reinforced the importance of integrating mental health into primary care.



The objectives of the refresher training were to reinforce essential clinical competencies by managing common mental health conditions, improve the quality of standardized care by ensuring retention and adherence to mhGAP guidelines, and enhance clinical decision-making through case discussions and role plays.

Participants highlighted the strengths of the initial training, continuous remote supervision, followed by a much-needed refresher training. The workshop also helped to strengthen coordination among clinical psychologists, doctors, and specialists. Additionally, concerns related to data entry, case documentation and monitoring were also discussed.

While the progress in implementation is evident, several challenges were also noted. Time constraints during busy clinic hours, excessive workload, administrative duties, and frequent transfers of physicians were noted as major barriers.

Overall, the workshop helped to consolidate skills, strengthen referral pathways, and sustain the delivery of quality MHPSS services in the district.

Mental Health Strategic Planning & Coordination Unit