

# Pakistan Mental Health Coalition Constitution

## Background

Pakistan has several organizations and individuals working on different aspects of mental health. However, these entities often work in isolation with little information about similar initiatives, leading to a duplication of efforts. Working collaboratively has a much more powerful impact than working in isolation. The need of the hour is a platform where different mental health stakeholders can come together to organize and synergize efforts.

The aim of the Pakistan Mental Health Coalition (PMHC) is to form a network of passionate and diverse mental health stakeholders to work together to address the major issues in mental health in the country. The members will not only include those entities working directly in mental health but also allied stakeholders such as media houses, corporations, and educational institutions. The Coalition will provide a platform to improve coordination and communication amongst different organisations/individuals, sharing of best practices, training and capacity building opportunities, recognizing gaps in the system and prioritizing issues to focus on collaboratively.

Ultimately, the PMHC aims to become the main voice of advocacy in Pakistan and bring about much needed policy change for increased investment and appropriate regulation of mental health services in the country.

## Vision and Objectives

The vision of the PMHC is as follows:

**To collaboratively promote a holistic and multisectoral approach for mental health in Pakistan.**

The objectives of the PMHC are as follows:

- 1.) To **advocate** for the development of comprehensive **national** and **provincial mental health legislation** and **strategic plans** using a **multisectoral** approach.
- 2.) To **develop** and **promote quality standards** for the delivery of **primary, secondary, and tertiary** mental health services.
- 3.) To **engage** members by providing them a **platform** for **capacity building** through the dissemination of **innovations** and **best practices** in the mental health field.
- 4.) To **establish** a **network** offering member organizations **opportunities** to embark on **collaborative interventions**.

## Coalition Structure

The PMHC is a coalition of organizations and individuals who are passionate about alleviating the psychological suffering being experienced by the Pakistani population and pushing for a national level agenda for mental health. The different organizations and individuals will work together under this umbrella to synergize their efforts to have the maximum impact possible.

The coalition will be organized in the following manner:

1.) **Core committee:**

- a. **Roles and Responsibilities:** A core team consisting of the main organizations will be formed who will be responsible for taking strategic decisions. These organizations will be chosen based on the level of responsibility they are willing to take and the resources they have specifically dedicated to the objectives of the coalition. Whilst input will be taken from all coalition members, the core group's aim is to focus efforts on the agreed strategic objectives and manage the implementation of agreed upon activities. The members of the core team will be required to sign an MOU to ensure a long-term commitment to the cause.
- b. **Number of Members:** The core committee will always comprise a minimum of 7 and a maximum of 9 member organizations/individuals. The members would be as representative of the different regions and cultural contexts of the country as possible, based on the fulfillment of relevant selection criteria.
- c. **Term:** The core committee members will serve for a period of 3 years, unless removed earlier, upon which the performance of the entire committee will be reviewed and evaluated by the coalition. Any member not performing or fulfilling their KPI as per the evaluation will be put up for removal via a vote. No core committee member will be allowed to serve for more than 2 terms.
- d. **Membership Criteria:** In addition to the general admission criteria, only such members who can dedicate specific resources to the coalition and have the requisite capacity to represent subcommittees and execute programs to achieve the coalition goals.
- e. **Election Procedure:** Elections of nominees will be held to determine members of the Core-committee every 3 years, in which existing members of the core committee and the general body shall all hold voting rights. However, only members dedicating specific resources towards achieving the goals of the coalition and/or proposed by a core-committee member based on their performance as part of sub-committees may be nominated for election to join the core committee. Elected organizations will have to nominate 1-2 (maximum 2) individuals to coordinate in the core on their behalf.
- f. **Removal of members:** A member may be removed only in the following circumstances:
  - i. The member violates the constitution in any manner which harms the coalition's reputation or goals.
  - ii. The member is absent from 3 consecutive meetings without due notice.
  - iii. The member is unable to fulfill the deliverables set for them.

In a situation where such violations occur, the core, by majority vote, will authorize the secretariat to send out a warning to the offending member but if the breach persists, or if the breach is so serious to warrant more severe action, the core committee may call a meeting to propose removal and give notice to the offending member so that they may attend the meeting and answer the charges. At the end of the meeting, if a 2/3 quorum of members of the core coalition deem that the breach warrants removal in the best interest of the coalition, the member will be removed from the coalition and any work being undertaken by them on behalf of the coalition will be taken over by an appropriate replacement. If the member being removed is acting as the secretariat, then another core committee member will be

nominated by the core to send out the warning notice and take over the responsibilities of the secretariat.

**g. Meeting schedule:**

- i. The meeting of the core committee will be conducted at least once a month for the first six months.
- ii. The meeting schedule will be reviewed after the first 6 months.

**h. Quorum for Meetings:**

- i. 5 members will be considered to suffice as quorum for coalition meetings.
- ii. Resolutions in meetings will be determined through majority vote.
- iii. For a motion pertaining to addition or removal of core-committee members, the resolution must be passed unanimously.

**2.) General Body:**

**a. Roles and Responsibilities**

The general body members will not be required to dedicate resources specifically for the coalition nor will they be compelled to generate capacity to fulfil broader coalition goals. Their role will be to inform decision making and strategy with their input, provide the services they offer free of cost and to play a support role in execution to the extent that their agenda allows. They may leverage and utilize all the coalition networks and resources and may add to them from time to time. Members could include service providers, public health organizations, communications experts etc.

**b. Number of Members**

The General Body will have no cap on the number of members willing to join and contribute to the coalition as part of the general body.

**c. Term**

Membership of the general body will be reviewed by the Secretariat annually, with a vote by the core committee for the removal of any members who are not active contributors to the coalition or have failed to remain compliant with the constitution or membership criteria in any shape or form.

**d. Membership Criteria**

For any organization/individual to become a part of the general coalition, they would have to fulfil the following criteria:

- i. They must be aligned with the coalition's vision.
- ii. Their proposed activities must fulfil some objective of the coalition.
- iii. They would pass the quality assessment carried out.

**e. Admission Procedure**

All interested organizations and individuals who qualify based on the membership criteria may apply to become a member of the coalition by submitting a completed membership form and appropriate additional documents to the secretariat. Should the initial verification by the secretariat be completed, all new membership application will be put to the core committee for final approval by vote based on whether the membership criteria is fulfilled. General body members may join subcommittees with different core members to implement their ideas or contribute to the organizations' activities.

**f. Removal of members**

A member may be removed only in the following circumstances:

- i. The member violates the constitution in any manner which causes harm to the coalition's goals or the coalition's mission or goal is being undermined by a member in any other way.
- ii. The member is unable to attend designated sub-committee meetings consecutively for 3 meetings.
- iii. The member is unable to fulfill the deliverables set for them.

In a situation where such violations occur, the secretariats will first send out a warning to the offending member organization but if the breach persists, or if the breach is so serious to warrant more severe action, the core committee and technical advisory board may call a meeting to propose removal and give notice to the offending member so that they may attend the meeting and answer the charges. At the end of the meeting, if a 2/3 quorum of members of the core coalition deem that the breach warrants removal in the best interest of the coalition, the member will be removed from the coalition and any work being undertaken by them on behalf of the coalition will be taken over by an appropriate replacement.

**g. Meeting schedule**

Meeting of the core committee and general body will be conducted once every 6 months.

**h. Quorum for Meetings**

For any resolutions to be passed at meetings, there needs to be a quorum of at least 2/3rd of the members.

**3.) Secretariat:**

- a. **Roles and Responsibilities:** These organizations will be responsible for dedicating resources for internal coordination and communications with external actors, after taking coalition input. The secretariat will organize and document meetings, ensure smooth functioning of the coalition, develop coalition culture, manage the coalition website and resources, and ensure that the mutually agreed goals are being met. The secretariat will also ensure a fair and transparent election process and smooth transition from one core-committee to the next.
- b. **Term:** The secretariat will serve for a consecutive period of three years. However, this term will not be concurrent with the term of the core-committee and shall end one year after the term of the core-committee. The first secretariat will therefore serve for 4 years.
- c. **Appointment Criteria:** While the coalition will remain non-hierarchical, for effective coordination to occur the secretariat of the coalition will be elected by a majority vote from amongst one or more members who are part of the core committee. The secretariat must be able to designate a full-time resource for management of the affairs of the coalition and must ensure that there are no conflicts of interest between its agendas as an organization and the agendas of the coalition.
- d. **Admission Procedure:** The first secretariat organization(s) will be chosen by majority vote among the core members. Elections shall be held every 3 years with voting rights for core-committee members.
- e. **Removal of Secretariat:** The secretariat may be removed in any of the following circumstances:
  - i. The secretariat violates the constitution in any manner which causes harm to the coalition's goals or the coalition's mission or goal is being undermined by a member in any other way.

- ii. The secretariat is unable to attend meetings consecutively for 3 meetings.
- iii. The secretariat is unable to fulfill the deliverables set for them.

Additionally, a performance review of the secretariat will be conducted at the end of each year, and should the performance fail to match the requisite minimum standards, an early call for elections may be made if passed by a 2/3rd majority of the core committee. The general body may also call for a vote from the core committee if the body unanimously feels that secretariat performance is not up to minimum standards.

- 4.) **Sub-committees:** The core committee will agree on the establishment of subcommittees addressing aspects of the coalition's agreed objectives and shall put these proposed sub-committees to the general body for membership at the bi-annual meetings. Some examples of potential initial sub-committees include advocacy, research, youth mental health etc. These will be led by either a core committee or general body member and shall include interested members from the core committee and general body. The member of the core committee who represents a particular sub-committee must report on its progress to the remaining core-members at the core committee meetings. The sub-committees will work on the execution of specific projects and programs on behalf of the coalition. A sub-committee may be disbanded by a majority vote of the core committee in a meeting called by any member, where it is found that the efforts of the committee are violative of the constitution or in any way, shape or form bring harm to the goals and objectives of the coalition or tarnish its reputation. The members of the coalition who are part of the sub-committee will be given an opportunity to answer any charges levelled against them before voting is undertaken.

## **Communication Mechanisms**

For smooth functioning of the coalition, it is important to agree upon consistent modes of communication, with clear agendas for discussion, to utilize the time of coalition members most efficiently. The secretariats will be responsible for coordinating the channels of communication. Day to day communication can occur on the WhatsApp group. Each member to share resources, useful material, links, networks, and collated information in the database (google drive) of the coalition. A website has been established ([www.pakmh.com](http://www.pakmh.com)) that contains details of the specific activities of all the active members of the response.

In addition to the tele-conferences, the entire coalition including core and general body members will meet for a full day in person conference **twice a year**. Quarterly newsletter will be shared with general body, so they are kept engaged and have a space to give in suggestions and input.