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QUARTERLY
NEWSLETTER



TRANSLATE

TRANSLATING EVIDENCE FOR EARLY INTERVENTION
IN PSYCHOSIS IN LMICS:
IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION

TRANSLATE is an NIHR-funded initiative aimed at establishing and evaluating early intervention in psychosis (EIP) services in Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The project assesses engagement and remission in first episode psychosis (FEP) and explores clinical markers linked to treatment-resistant schizophrenia (TRS). Additionally, the study will develop a clinical tool for early TRS risk prediction, tailored for use in low- and lower-middle-income countries.



TRANSLATE SITE INITIATION VISIT (SIV) & STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOPs) TRAINING WORKSHOP REPORT

DATES: 7–8 AUGUST 2025

VENUE: ONLINE (KHYBER MEDICAL UNIVERSITY, PESHAWAR)

The TRANSLATE Site Initiation Visit (SIV) and Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) Training Workshop took place online on 7–8 August 2025, bringing together participating research teams from Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The purpose of the workshop was to standardise understanding of study processes and ensure operational readiness for the implementation of the TRANSLATE study, which aims to adapt and evaluate Early Intervention in Psychosis (EIP) services in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). The study focuses on reducing the Duration of Untreated Psychosis (DUP), which often exceeds two years in LMICs and significantly impacts long-term outcomes for young people experiencing first-episode psychosis.

Day 1:

Centred on detailed training in the study SOPs. Key topics included referral pathways, eligibility and screening procedures, informed consent, diagnostic assessments, baseline and follow-up data collection, pharmacological and psychosocial management, retention strategies, adverse event and serious adverse event reporting, and data confidentiality. Facilitators also emphasised safety protocols for staff and conducted a thorough Q&A session.

Day 2:

Focused on Site Initiation Visit procedures, covering study workflows, documentation requirements, investigator site files, patient files, roles and responsibilities, and data storage and transfer processes. Monitoring visit plans and compliance expectations were reviewed, ensuring all sites understood operational responsibilities. Both days included discussions led by senior clinicians, coordinators, and investigators from the TRANSLATE team. The workshop strengthened collaboration across international sites, enhanced protocol compliance, and ensured consistent implementation of the adapted EIP model within LMIC contexts. It marked an important milestone in preparing study teams for effective delivery, monitoring, and evaluation of the TRANSLATE project.

CONSENSUS BUILDING SECOND & FINAL WORKSHOP

DATED: 11TH AUGUST 2025

The Second and Final Consensus-Building Workshop under the TRANSLATE project—Translating evidence for Early Intervention in Psychosis (EIP) in Low- and Lower-Middle-Income Countries (LMICs)—was held on 11 August 2025 to refine and finalise a culturally and contextually adapted EIP service model for implementation in LMIC settings. The workshop aimed to address gaps identified during the first workshop and to establish clear agreement on essential components of care for individuals experiencing First Episode Psychosis (FEP), with the overarching goal of reducing the Duration of Untreated Psychosis (DUP). Using the Nominal Group Technique (NGT), participants worked through areas of divergence and reached structured consensus across all major aspects of the service model.

Consensus was achieved on broad, community-integrated referral pathways, including sources such as Traditional and Spiritual Healers (TSH), community health workers, educational institutions, drug rehabilitation centres, local mosques and madrassas, family members, and emergency services such as Rescue 1122. Agreement was also reached on multidisciplinary assessment procedures, involving Psychiatrists, Psychologists, trained Nurses, and on-call Doctors, with Occupational Therapists (OTs) introduced in later rehabilitation stages rather than during initial assessment.

Clear prescribing boundaries were endorsed, limiting medication authority to Psychiatrists and trained General Practitioners (GPs). Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for Psychosis (CBT-P) was approved to be delivered solely by certified CBT-P Psychiatrists or Psychologists. Physical health screening and monitoring responsibilities were allocated to trained Nurses and Primary Health Centres (PHC). A dedicated Care Coordinator role was unanimously supported, alongside structured family psychoeducation delivered with the support of an Electronic Health Record (EHR) system to enhance communication, documentation, and continuity of care.



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The workshop further endorsed the inclusion of OTs to lead supported employment, vocational rehabilitation, and functional recovery. Strong consensus was also reached on a comprehensive supervision and quality-assurance structure involving internal monitoring, external monitoring, peer supervision, and managerial supervision to maintain service fidelity. Sustainable financing mechanisms were agreed upon, including use of the Sehat Card, donations, partnerships with pharmaceutical companies, non-governmental organisation (NGO) support, Bait-ul-Maal, and the Benazir Income Support (BIS) programme.

Overall, the workshop successfully finalised a culturally sensitive, resource-appropriate EIP model ready for phased implementation in LMIC contexts. The agreed framework is designed to improve early detection, reduce DUP, support recovery in FEP, and enhance long-term sustainability through clear governance, diversified funding, and strong community integration.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & INVOLVEMENT (CEI)

ORGANISERS: DR. SHUMAILA HAMID, DR. AMIR WAHAB, EMAN ISMAIL, ZAINAB REHMAN, DANISH KHAN.

FACILITATORS: ISHFAQ TARIQ AZEEMI, UZAIR SHAH, TAHA AYUB

DATE: 27TH AUGUST, 2025

VENUE: COMMITTEE ROOM, INSTITUTE OF FAMILY MEDICINE, KHYBER MEDICAL UNIVERSITY, PESHAWAR

The TRANSLATE CEI Advisory Board meeting was convened to strengthen meaningful community engagement within the ongoing TRANSLATE research project on psychosis. Attended by nine CEI members representing carers, patients, educators, and community voices, the meeting provided training, updates, and strategic discussion on engagement and research progress.

CEI Advisory Board Members

Dr Hanan (Male Carer, Associate Professor, FATA University), Ms Sara Arbab (Patient, Lecturer, IQRA University), Mrs Rafia (School Teacher, Carer: wife of recovered patient), Mr Adil (Business Owner, Traditional & Spiritual Healer), Isha (Graduate Student, IM Sciences), Haseena (Recovered Patient), Gul Bhaghicha (Mother, Housewife), Fatima (Female Carer)

Session Highlights

Mr Uzair Shah opened with a recap of the previous meeting and delivered refresher training on CEI, emphasising the importance of community representation, clarity of roles, and active contribution. This aligned with NIHR's principle on transparency of expectations.

Facilitator Faryal Fazal introduced NIHR's seven guiding principles, covering early engagement, understanding community context, power-sharing, relationship-building, flexibility, and embedding monitoring and learning within CEI practices. Participants reflected on how these principles shape their advisory role.

Update on TRANSLATE Activities

Ishfaq Tariq Azeemi presented key project updates:

- Nine Focus Group Discussions across Quetta, Hyderabad, Faisalabad, Abbottabad, and Peshawar generating insights into service gaps and stakeholder needs.
- Completion of a Theory of Change workshop and two consensus-building workshops.
- Successful ethical and institutional approvals enabling the next research stages.

Engagement & Discussion

Members raised thoughtful questions regarding Focused Group Discussions outcomes, treatment duration, TSH involvement, patient satisfaction, financial support, awareness efforts, psychological services, and data safety. Responses were provided by Uzair Shah, Ishfaq Tariq Azeemi, Dr Amir Wahab, Zainab, Eman, and Dr Shumaila.

Key clarifications included:

- Early detection improves psychosis outcomes despite long treatment pathways in local contexts.
- Psychologists are part of every site team.
- Free medication will be provided to enrolled patients.
- Awareness campaigns are being planned for communities and educational institutions.
- Data confidentiality is secured through informed consent and monitoring systems.

Digital Tools & Assessment Demonstrations

Taha Ayub presented digital tools such as ODK for data management, and demonstrated the ECOG and DSST assessment tools, highlighting their usefulness in functional and cognitive evaluation. He emphasised capacity building for field teams to ensure accuracy and consistency.

Closing Remarks

Dr Shumaila Hamid thanked members for their engaged participation, acknowledging their vital role in keeping the TRANSLATE project community-centred, ethically grounded, and responsive to stakeholder needs.



REPORT OF SITE INITIATION VISIT ABBOTTABAD

DATE: 18TH OCTOBER, 2025

A site initiation visit was conducted at the Abbottabad site by Dr. Saeed Farooq (Chief Investigator), Dr. Jalil (Lead, Pakistan), and Uzair Shah (Assistant Coordinator) on 18th October.

The team was welcomed by Dr. Aftab (Site Lead), who introduced the site team to the Chief Investigator and provided a comprehensive update on site preparations. The site lead showed the designated study area and the available medication stock.

During the visit, the CI and Lead reviewed the master file, study logs, and other essential documents. They expressed appreciation for the efforts of the site lead and the team in ensuring timely readiness.

Dr. Saeed also reviewed the ODK system, interacted with the site team regarding operational challenges, and discussed areas for improvement and the way forward.

A few suggestions for further improvement were shared to enhance documentation quality.



IDENTIFICATION AND MANAGEMENT OF SEVERE MENTAL ILLNESS IN POSTPARTUM WOMEN
(UNDER THE TRANSLATE-PPP PROJECT – TRANSLATING EVIDENCE FOR EARLY INTERVENTION IN PSYCHOSIS IN LMICs)
ORGANISED BY: INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC MENTAL HEALTH & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES (IPMH&BS), KHYBER MEDICAL UNIVERSITY (KMU)
DATE: 29TH OCTOBER 2025
VENUE: RIAZ QURESHI ROOM, INSTITUTE OF FAMILY MEDICINE, KMU

The Institute of Public Mental Health & Behavioural Sciences (IPMH&BS), KMU, hosted a focused workshop under the TRANSLATE-PPP Project to strengthen the capacity of obstetricians in identifying and managing severe mental illness (SMI) in postpartum women. The initiative forms part of the wider effort to enhance early intervention for psychosis and related disorders in low- and lower-middle-income countries.

Participants

Consultant obstetricians from major tertiary hospitals in Peshawar attended, including representatives from: Lady Reading Hospital (LRH), Khyber Teaching Hospital (KTH), Hayatabad Medical Complex (HMC), Rehman Medical Institute (RMI), North West General Hospital (NWGH), and Peshawar General Hospital (PGH). Their engagement highlighted a shared recognition of the urgent need to integrate mental health within routine maternity care.

Workshop Highlights

- Prof. Mukhtar ul Haq Azeemi (Consultant Psychiatrist, LRH) delivered the opening remarks, underscoring the risks of undetected postpartum psychiatric symptoms and the importance of close obstetric–psychiatric collaboration.
- Dr M. Imran Khan (Chairman of Psychiatry, KTH) presented a clinical overview of postpartum depression, bipolar disorder, and psychosis, stressing the need for early diagnosis and systematic mental health screening in obstetric services.
- Dr Sylvia Ali Khan (Consultant Psychiatrist, RMI) spoke on recognising high-risk patients, outlining key indicators including prior psychiatric history, bipolar disorder, and psychosocial stressors. She advocated for simple, empathic screening during antenatal and postnatal visits.
- Dr M. Firaz (Associate Professor, IPMH&BS, KMU) provided guidance on management strategies, including medication safety during pregnancy and breastfeeding, and approaches to psychiatric emergencies such as acute psychosis and suicidality.
- Dr Abdul Jalil Khan (Professor of Family Medicine, KMU) discussed the essential integration of physical and mental health in postpartum care, promoting a holistic view of maternal wellbeing.
- An interactive case-based session, led by Dr Aamir Aziz and Dr Laila Naushad, enabled participants to apply diagnostic and management principles to real-world scenarios, reinforcing interdisciplinary communication.
- In closing, Prof. Saeed Farooq commended contributors and reiterated KMU’s commitment to advancing maternal mental health through the TRANSLATE-PPP initiative.

Key Takeaways

- Enhanced understanding of postpartum psychiatric disorders and early warning signs.
- Increased confidence among obstetricians in recognising and managing SMI.
- Strong support for collaborative obstetric–psychiatric care models.
- Consensus to introduce mental health screening in routine maternity pathways.
- Improved awareness of medication safety, referral pathways, and crisis management.
- Conclusion
- The workshop successfully strengthened clinical competence and interdisciplinary collaboration across maternity and mental health services. It represents an important step toward improving outcomes for postpartum women and supporting the wider goals of the TRANSLATE-PPP Project.

Report compiled by Eman Ismail, Site Coordinator, KMU, Project TRANSLATE.



THEORY OF CHANGE WORKSHOP

DEVELOPING THEORY OF CHANGE FOR THE TRANSLATING EVIDENCE FOR EARLY INTERVENTION IN PSYCHOSIS IN LOW AND LOWER MIDDLE-INCOME COUNTRIES (LMIC): IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION

ORGANISED BY: INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC MENTAL HEALTH & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES (IPMH&BS), KHYBER MEDICAL UNIVERSITY (KMU)

DATE: 13TH OF NOVEMBER, 2025

VENUE: ICRC ROOM, INSTITUTE OF FAMILY MEDICINE, KMU

A multidisciplinary Theory of Change (ToC) workshop was held at KMU to support the development of a clear and evidence-based implementation pathway for the TRANSLATE PPP Project, which aims to improve early intervention for postpartum psychosis in low- and lower-middle-income countries.

The workshop brought together psychiatrists, psychologists, obstetricians, nurses, a health administrator, and crucially, both a patient and a carer, ensuring the perspective of lived experience informed every stage of discussion.

Opening Session

Dr Aamer Aziz welcomed attendees and outlined the workshop's purpose, establishing a collaborative tone and shared expectations for the day.

Project and Clinical Context

Facilitators: Eman Ismail and Dr Aamir Aziz

Two brief presentations provided essential background:

- An overview of the TRANSLATE PPP project, its progress, and direction.
- A summary of the Mother Baby Unit pathway in postpartum psychosis care.

Introduction to the Theory of Change

Facilitator: Faryal Fazal

Ms Fazal introduced the ToC framework and its importance in planning complex health interventions. This session laid the groundwork for the outcome-mapping work that followed.

Developing the Theory of Change

Facilitators: Dr Aamir Aziz, Eman Ismail, and Faryal Fazal

Participants worked collaboratively to:

- Identify the main challenges in detecting and managing postpartum psychosis.
- Agree on the long-term impact the project seeks to achieve.
- Map short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes along with their causal pathways.
- Consider contextual constraints, assumptions, and potential implementation risks.

Strategies, Activities, and Accountability

Moving from outcomes to action, groups identified:

- Strategies and interventions required to progress through each outcome stage.
- The project's "ceiling of accountability"—clarifying which outcomes TRANSLATE PPP can directly influence.
- Priority activities and where wider stakeholder engagement may be necessary.

This exercise refined the draft ToC map and highlighted practical next steps.

Closing Reflections

Facilitators: Dr Aamir Aziz and Faryal Fazal

The workshop concluded with a reflective discussion and Q&A, allowing participants to comment on the ToC process, highlight practical considerations, and outline how the day's outputs will inform the next development phase



Edited and written by: Dr. Shumaila Hamid, Eman Ismail & Sualiha Ali

MEET THE PAKISTAN TEAM:



Prof. Abdul Jalil Khan
Academic lead



Prof. Mukhtar ul Haq Azeemi
Lead Consultant



Prof. Moin Ansari
Site lead



Prof. Imtiaz Ali Dogar
Site lead



Prof. Hazrat Ali
Site lead



Prof. Aftab Alam Khan
Site lead



Dr. Muhammad Firaz Khan
Lead Consultant



Dr. Laila Noushad
Post Doc Research Fellow



Ishfaq Tariq Azeemi
Manager Operations



Dr. Amir Wahab
Clinical Research Fellow



Dr. Shumaila Hamid
Manager Academics



Maryum Rahim
Qualitative Researcher



Syed Muhammad Uzair Shah
Assistant Coordinator



Taha Ayub Azeemi
Assistant Coordinator



Dr. Amir Aziz
Clinical Research Fellow



Fatima Ruby
Research Assistant



Saba Gul
Research Assistant



Eman Ismail
Research Assistant



Zainab Rehman
Research Assistant

MEET THE UK TEAM:



Professor Saeed Farooq
Chief Investigator



Dr Nalinda Wellappuli
Post-Doctoral Research Associate



Dr Nishani Fonseka
Postdoc Research Associate & Capacity
Development Lead



Sualiha Ali
Research Assistant



Abbie Milner
Research Assistant and Implementation
Research Lead

MEET THE SRI LANKA TEAM:



Prof. Athula Sumathipala
Director, IRD



Dr. Rumi Ruben
Principal Lead



Dr. Risitha Wakishta Arachchi
Research Assistant



Sameeha Jabir
Research Assistant



Hirudimalee De Silva
Research Assistant



Oshini Jayasinghe