

One-day National Workshop on “NAVIGATING THE MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT IN CATASTROPHES AND EMERGENCIES: CRISIS CARE”

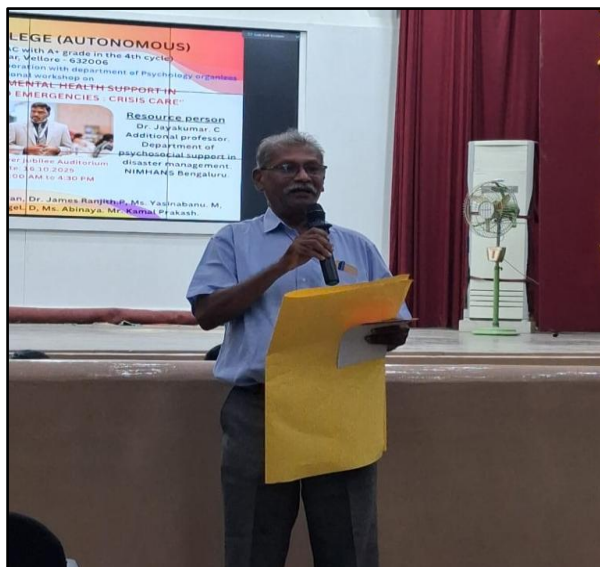
On October 16, 2025, the Department of Social Work & Psychology, Auxilium College, Vellore, commemorated World Mental Health Day by organizing a national workshop on the WMH theme 2025 "Access to Services: Mental Health in Catastrophes and Emergencies" in technical collaboration with the National Institute of Mental Health and Neuroscience (NIMHANS) (INI), Bengaluru. This one-day national workshop was designed to provide participants with the knowledge and skills needed to negotiate the difficulties of mental health support during disasters and emergencies. Dr. Jayakumar C., Additional Professor, Department of Psychosocial Support in Disaster Management, NIMHANS, Bengaluru, served as the national workshop's resource person, sharing valuable insights on HRV analysis, crisis intervention, and mental health management during disaster situations. The workshop began with an introductory ceremony presided over by the principal, Dr. (Sr.) Arokia Jayaceli A., and the event attracted 169 attendees from various institutions and fields.



The workshop began with an expectation-sharing activity in which participants were divided into small groups to discuss and outline their expectations for the session. This was followed by a thought-provoking film screening depicting the difficulties experienced by individuals and communities during and after disasters. The film inspired a thoughtful conversation, emphasising the critical role of social workers and psychologists in crises.



The second session focused on HRV (Hazards, Risks, and Vulnerabilities) analysis, where participants were assigned to represent different districts of Tamil Nadu. Through group discussions and presentations, students gained a deeper understanding of the environmental, social, and infrastructural vulnerabilities associated with each district. This activity not only enhanced their analytical skills but also promoted teamwork and effective communication.



The third session included an interactive balloon exercise aimed to reinforce the concepts covered throughout the training. Participants had to work together to keep the balloons in the air while overcoming a series of obstacles. This practice functioned as an effective metaphor for life's obstacles, emphasising the value of resilience, teamwork, and confidence in the face of adversity.



Conclusion: The events provided participants with significant insights into catastrophe management and crisis care, as well as the development of necessary skills. The event ended with an acknowledgement of the participants' efforts, emphasising the need for mental health support in disasters and emergencies. Overall, the event was a huge success, offering a platform for students to learn, grow and develop into future professionals in social work and psychology.

