

Educational Opportunities for Nepalese Early Career Psychiatrists and Trainees

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INTRODUCTION

In Nepal, three years post-graduate psychiatry training started in 1997. There has been significant growth in psychiatry training opportunities over the past two decades and currently available in 16 institutes. There are five different post-graduate training programs, and the training curriculum and evaluation process is not uniform. Hence, there are some variations in available training opportunities. There are about 45 residents (trainees) currently training in psychiatry. The term 'early career psychiatrists' (ECPs) includes trainees in psychiatry and psychiatrists within seven years of graduation.¹ Early career is a crucial stage in the professional trajectory of young psychiatrists to prepare themselves for future leadership roles in the rapidly changing current mental health care system. However, many ECPs encounter challenges during the transition from residency to independent professional such as training deficits, adjustment to new roles and responsibilities, and developing skills to 'survive' and thrive the change.²⁻³ Acquiring skills in leadership, management and teaching were the unmet training needs identified in a survey of young psychiatrists in Asia.⁴ These concerns shared by ECPs in other countries are also commonly experienced by ECPs in Nepal. Recent studies from Nepal have shown that there are deficits in the training of psychiatrists which can pose challenges in the professional development as early-career psychiatrists.⁵⁻⁷ Therefore, there is a clear need to address these learning gaps by promoting participation of

Nepalese ECPs in the educational and training opportunities available within and outside the country. The main aim of this article is to create awareness among Nepalese ECPs about such opportunities.

Furthermore, there is a substantial recognition of the role of national and international young psychiatrists' networks to promote collaborative frameworks to help ECPs achieve their full potential.⁸⁻⁹ Although there are no formal networks or associations of early career psychiatrists in the Nepal, Psychiatrists' Association of Nepal (PAN) has been instrumental in encouraging and facilitating participation of ECPs in academic and research activities. A substantial number of Nepalese ECPs have received various grants, fellowships, and awards to participate in international conferences and meetings. They have also become members of international ECPs associations/groups, actively involved in networking programs and leading numerous collaborative projects across different cities and countries.¹⁰⁻¹⁸ These achievements have further inspired and encouraged ECPs to represent Nepal and connect with international colleagues, share knowledge and experiences.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

A discussion was held among the contributors to focus on the current educational needs of ECPs and opportunities. We explored across numerous opportunities offered by national and international psychiatric associations and related organisations to promote the

professional development of ECPs, offer mentorship, and enable global networks for further collaboration. Active engagement of ECPs in these opportunities opens the access to these benefits. To the best of our knowledge, the educational opportunities classified into:

- (a) Meetings, Associations and Networks
- (b) Fellowships, Travel Awards and Grants
- (c) Leadership and Professional Skills Course
- (d) Online Courses

(e) Training Courses

The opportunities are not limited to this list and ECPs are encouraged to explore further the already available and upcoming new avenues for their personal growth and career development. Interested ECPs can seek further information on the available references.

A. Meetings, Associations and Networks

Table 1: Meetings, Associations, and Networks

No.	Organisation	Notes
1.	Psychiatrists' Association of Nepal (PAN)	Representative body for psychiatrists in Nepal Membership provides academic and networking opportunities. https://psychiatrynepal.org.np/
2.	World Psychiatric Association (WPA) - Early Career Psychiatrists (ECP) Section	Worldwide network of collaboration for trainees and ECPs Short CV and motivation letter is required to join the section https://www.wpanet.org/early-career-psychiatrists
3.	European Federation of Psychiatric Trainees (EFPT)	Federation of national associations of psychiatric trainees in Europe. Membership is via being part of a member national association in Europe. Non-European trainees can collaborate in their working groups, research projects and the Overseas programme (see Table 2) http://efpt.eu/
4.	Young Psychiatrists Network (YPN)	Engages young psychiatrists for year-long networking and annual meetings. https://www.mhinnovation.net/organisations/young-psychiatrists-network
5.	Network of Early Career Professionals in Addiction Medicine (NECPAM)	Network of early-career professionals working in the field of addiction medicine. http://necpam.co/
6.	World Network of Psychiatric Trainees (WNPT)	Open network for individual trainees across the world, promoting global collaboration and the development of local, national, and international associations of psychiatric trainees. https://www.mhinnovation.net/organisations/world-network-psychiatric-trainees

B. Fellowships, Travel Awards and Grants

Table 2: Fellowships, Travel Awards and Grants

No.	Fellowship/Award/Grant	Organisation	Notes
1.	Research Grant	Psychiatrists' Association of Nepal	Annual grant to three research projects in Nepal
2.	WPA Fellowship	World Psychiatric Association (WPA)	Support ECPs' attendance to the World Congress
3.	WASP Fellowship	World Association of Social Psychiatry (WASP)	PAN can nominate up to two Nepalese ECPs
4.	Young Psychiatrist Scholarship Program	Asian Federation of Psychiatric Associations (AFPA)	Scholarship to attend the World Congress of Asian Psychiatry
5.	JSPN Fellowship	Japanese Society of Psychiatry and Neurology (JSPN)	PAN can nominate up to two Nepalese ECPs
6.	REBAMP Travel Award	Research and Education Centre of Bridging Asian Mental Health and Psychiatry (REBAMP)	Travel awards to young researchers from South, Southeast Asian and Australasian countries
7.	WFSBP Young Investigator Award	World Federation of Biological Psychiatry Society (WFSBP)	Travel grant to attend the biennial congress
8.	Travel Fellowship Awards - Early Career Investigator-International	Society of Biological Psychiatry (SOBP)	Recognises the work of junior researchers in their annual meeting
9.	AsCNP Young Psychiatrist Award	Asian College of Neuro - psychopharmacology	Award to attend the biennial congress
10.	Early Career Award Program	Schizophrenia International Research Society (SIRS)	Attend and present at the annual meeting
11.	South Asian Division: RCPsych International Conference Bursary for trainees	Royal College of Psychiatrists (RCPsych)	Support attendance of psychiatry trainees to the annual RCPsych conference
12.	Bursary for psychiatrists' form developing countries	RCPsych Faculty: Old Age, Intellectual Disability, Rehabilitation and Social Psychiatry	Funds psychiatrist from a low or middle-income country to attend Faculty annual conference
13.	Early Career Psychiatrists Fellowship	Ain Shams Institute of Psychiatry, Egypt	Support attendance to their annual congress
14.	ISAM Travel Award	International Society of Addiction Medicine (ISAM)	Travel grant to attend annual meeting
15.	TWIST Bursary	Training with Stakeholders- Applying EU Addiction Research (funded by European Commission)	Support participation in the TWIST training at Lisbon Addictions Meeting
16.	Helmut Remschmidt Research Seminar	International Association for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Allied Professions' (IACAPAP)	Research training workshop for emerging researchers in child and adolescent psychiatry (CAP)
17.	Donald J. Cohen Fellowship	IACAPAP	Mentorship/training program for young professionals in CAP
18.	International Training Research Seminar in CAP	Foundation Child	Intensive training on topics related to research in CAP
19.	ISSM Scholarship	International Society of Sexual Medicine (ISSM)	Offers ten scholarships to attend their annual sexual medicine school
20.	European Federation of Psychiatric Trainees (EFPT) Maintaining and Establishing Networks of Trainees Association (MENTA) Overseas programme award	European Federation of Psychiatric Trainees - MENTA Working Group	Invites selected non-European trainees to attend the EFPT Annual Forum

C. Leadership and Professional Courses

1. Leadership and Professional Skills Course for Early Career Psychiatrists: This project was initiated by Professor Norman Sartorius in 1994.¹⁹ More than two thousand early career psychiatrists from over hundred countries have participated in this course.²⁰ The aim of this course is to provide training in professional skills and establish collaborative network of young psychiatrists worldwide. This course takes place several times a year in different cities in the world. Dr Ramachandra N Moorthy Foundation for Mental Health and Neurological Sciences provides generous support to attend this prestigious course at the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurological Sciences (NIMHANS) in Bengaluru, India.
2. Leadership in Mental Health (LMH): This course was established in 2008 in Goa, India to develop leadership capacity among mental health professionals to scale up mental health programmes in low resource settings.²¹ Over 400 participants from around the world have participated in this course.
3. Course on Academic Development of Psychiatrists (CADP): This annual course is organised by Japanese Young Psychiatrists' Organisation (JYPO) with the aim to develop academic and leadership skills and establish international collaboration among early career psychiatrists.²²

D. Online Courses

1. AuthorAID training courses: AuthorAID offers regular, free online courses in research writing and grant proposal writing for researchers in developing countries.²³ Certificate is provided after completion of the training modules.
2. Electroencephalogram (EEG) course: The International League against Epilepsy's Virtual Epilepsy Academy (VIREPA) provides an interactive online course on EEG in the diagnosis and management of epilepsy.²⁴ The academy also offers bursary for participants from low- and middle-income countries (LAMIC).
3. Beck's Online CBT course: Beck's Institute offers online CBT training modules with supervision to mental health professionals.²⁵

4. EPA Online Course: EPA Committee on Education has developed training modules on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), Motivational Interviewing and Depressive disorder.²⁶ International EPA members also have free access to these modules.
5. The EFPT Online Psychotherapy Journal Club: EFPT Psychotherapy Working Group organises regular videoconference-based journal club and often invite renowned psychotherapists/authors for discussion on psychotherapy articles.²⁷
6. eJIndia: Electronic Journal Club of India was launched in 2015 and lead by Professor Chittaranjan Andrade. Members can participate and discuss in various review activities and numerous journal articles have been published.²⁸

E. Training Courses

No.	Program	Organisation	Notes
1.	Medical Training Initiative (MTI) Psychiatry Scheme ²⁹	RCPsych	Supports international psychiatrists to work and train in the UK for two years, and then return to their home countries
2.	Postgraduate Overseas Specialists Training (POST) Program ³⁰	St Vincent's Mental Health and University of Melbourne, Australia	Offers clinical training fellowships in various psychiatric specialists for overseas psychiatrists from the Asia-Pacific regions.
3.	Specialist Specified Training (SST) ³¹	The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists	Offers overseas psychiatrists to undertake short-term supervised training in Australia
4.	CAPE (Clinical Attachment Programme for East of England) ³²	East of England Deanery	Offers observership positions for overseas psychiatrist in the National Health Services (NHS)
5.	OMI-Salzburg Medical Seminars ³³	Open Medical Institute (OMI)	Supports the attendance to their annual psychiatry seminars.

The Way Forward

1. Residents Meeting: The inaugural National Residents Meeting was held in Dharan on 11th August 2018, organised by Department of Psychiatry, BPKIHS. Different sessions were organised targeting the educational needs of the trainees. Such meeting should be organised regularly at national level as it facilitates peer networks and promotes quality improvement of psychiatry training.
2. Proposal of initiation of Residents Section in PAN: It will encourage participation and integration of trainees in the association at an earlier stage of career and promote their professional development. The section under guidance of PAN can actively organise educational events and assess training needs.
3. Dedicated Track for young psychiatrists/trainees in the National/Regional PAN Conference/Meetings to engage and facilitate their participation, present the results of their own research projects, share their experiences, and learn from each other.
4. Exchange opportunities: EFPT Exchange Program is a short-term observership program for European psychiatric trainees established in 2011 and offers placements in various subspecialties of psychiatry in 17 different European countries.³⁴ The EFPT Exchange Working Group has initiated developing exchange programs outside Europe. Interested host institutions in Nepal can collaborate and develop exchange programs. In addition to that, WPA ECP Section has also proposed worldwide psychiatry exchange programs and it would be a good opportunity for Nepalese ECPs to actively participate in this initiative.⁸
5. Research to address training needs: Research activities such as web-based surveys that explore further training needs of ECPs will enable systematic assessment of the training needs of ECPs in Nepal and help to bridge the gap of sub-specialist services. To sum up, ECPs are the working backbone and the future leaders of psychiatry, addressing their needs should be priority for all of us.

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