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Focus Sri Lanka

Healthcare: Psychiatric care

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Question

This report answers the following questions:

- How is psychiatric healthcare structured and organised?
- What psychiatric treatment is available in Sri Lanka, specifically in the Northern Province and Jaffna District, and what psychiatric conditions can be treated in Sri Lanka?
- Which psychotropic drugs are available in Sri Lanka?
- Are there restrictions in the availability of treatment and restrictions in access to psychiatric treatment due to the economic crisis?

Main findings

The state health care system for people with mental health problems in Sri Lanka differs in some respects from Swiss models: it takes into account local needs, cultural conditions and the impact of years of war and natural disasters.

Access to mental health facilities as well as to psychiatrists is guaranteed throughout the country including in remote, rural areas. Almost all medium and large hospitals in most districts of Sri Lanka have psychiatric departments run by qualified psychiatrists. The hospitals have psychiatric departments for acute and long-term inpatient treatments as well as psychiatric outpatient clinics. On certain days, psychiatric outpatient clinics are also run at small hospitals in rural areas. In many districts, there are centres for the rehabilitation and reintegration of chronically mentally ill persons. In the public healthcare system, waiting times for an appointment with a psychiatrist are usually less than a week and patients have a free choice of doctor. Nationwide and regional psychiatric hotlines are available for psychiatric emergencies.

Half of all outpatient medical treatments and consultations in the Sri Lankan healthcare system are administered by private healthcare providers. Thanks to modern, app-based booking systems, medical consultations with senior registrars and counsellors can be arranged quickly, sometimes on the same day. Private medical consultations are common in Sri Lanka and they are not only used by the wealthy. All medical treatments reviewed for this report are available in the private healthcare system.

The standard psychiatric treatments listed by the MedCOI project¹ of the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) are for the most part available nationwide in Sri Lanka and are also accessible to patients. There are limitations to psychiatric treatment using Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR) therapy. Depending on the source, these are only available in a few clinics or are not possible due to time constraints. Psychotherapies with clinical psychologists are available without restriction in the private health care system. In the public healthcare system, psychotherapy is provided by registrars or counsellors.

In the facilities visited by the SEM Country Analysis, common psychotropic drugs² and other drugs that treat secondary diseases are available. In Sri Lanka, it is common for the often much cheaper previous generation of drugs to be used (as opposed to the most recent generation of drugs) for reasons of cost.

Qualified mental health care personnel are available in public and private healthcare facilities throughout the country. This also applies to the largely Tamil-speaking Northern Province. In the Jaffna District, in addition to three consultants, there are six other trained psychiatrists (senior registrars), six mental health medical officers working in psychiatric departments, and a number of mental health nurses, trained counsellors, psychiatric social workers and psychiatric patient rehabilitation specialists.

The public healthcare system is functioning normally to a large extent, despite the economic crisis that has been going on since 2022. There are no indications of hospitals or departments

¹ European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA), Malta. MedCOI, Medical Country of Origin Information, [undated]. <https://medcoi.euaa.europa.eu/> (31/03/2023).

² Pharmawiki. Disentis/Mustér. Psychotropic: Influencing the psyche. 14.06.2012. <https://www.pharmawiki.ch/wiki/index.php?wiki=Psychotrop> (27.03.2023) in German.

being closed or medical treatments being discontinued. The availability of medicines has stabilised in the state healthcare system. Patients receive the standard medication they need. Medicines that are temporarily unavailable in the public healthcare system can be obtained from private pharmacies.

1. Sources / Methodology

Due to years of conflict and natural disasters such as the 2004 tsunami, Sri Lanka has developed a state healthcare system that differs in part from Swiss models, but takes local needs and cultural conditions into account in a flexible manner. In July 2020, the British *Home Office* published a detailed report on medical treatment and care in Sri Lanka. It includes a five-page chapter on psychiatric care.³ The Swiss Refugee Council (SFH) published an issue paper on psychiatric treatment and psychotherapy in northern Sri Lanka in 2020.⁴

In the first quarter of 2022, when the economic crisis led to severe supply bottlenecks in Sri Lanka, numerous international media reported on the crisis in the Sri Lankan healthcare system. In the reports, representatives of healthcare staff expressed fears that healthcare provision could collapse.⁵

Since the outbreak of the economic crisis in spring 2022, the Sri Lankan Ministry of Health has been working with the World Health Organisation (WHO) to compile a list of essential and indispensable medicines⁶⁷ and a list of medical equipment needed in Sri Lanka⁸. This list is updated approximately quarterly and distributed to interested parties.

The SEM country analysis reviewed and supplemented this information during a fact-finding mission in February 2023. The aim of the trip was to find out on site and from those affected how the healthcare system in the field of psychiatry works on a day-to-day basis and how the economic crisis is affecting domestic healthcare. The SEM country analysis had unrestricted access to the National Referral Hospital for Psychiatry in Angoda near Colombo, Jaffna University Hospital, three regional hospitals in the north, a large private hospital in Colombo and other psychiatric healthcare facilities. Further meetings were held with the Ministry of Health, a regional health authority, the pharmaceutical authority, a private pharmacy, doctors, nursing staff, non-governmental organisations, the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Colombo, the *Government Medical Officers Association* (GMOA) and relatives of psychiatric patients.

³ London, Home Office. Country Policy and Information Note Sri Lanka: Medical treatment and healthcare. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/903780/Sri_Lanka_-_Medical_CPIN_-_v.1.0_July_2020.pdf (07.03.2023).

⁴ Swiss Refugee Council (SFH), Bern. Sri Lanka: Psychiatric treatment and psychotherapy in the north, 03.09.2020. https://www.fluechtlingshilfe.ch/fileadmin/user_upload/Publikationen/Herkunftslanderberichte/Asien-Pazifik/Sri_Lanka/200903_Lka_Psychiatrische_Behandlung.pdf (07.03.2023).

⁵ Examples: BBC, London. Sri Lanka healthcare on verge of collapse in economic crisis, 17.04.2022. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-61111405> (07.03.2023). / Reuters, London. Drugs running out, surgeries cancelled as Sri Lanka's health system buckles, 12.04.2022. <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/drugs-running-out-surgeries-cancelled-sri-lankas-health-system-buckles-2022-04-12/> (07.03.2023). / BBC, London. Sri Lanka hikes price of medicines 40% amid economic crisis, 30.04.2022. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-61285290> (07.03.2023). / Reuters, London. Sri Lankan medicine shortage a death sentence for some, doctors say, 23.05.2022. <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/sri-lankan-medicine-shortage-death-sentence-some-doctors-say-2022-05-23/> (07.03.2023). / The Guardian, London. 'People are going to die': crisis-hit Sri Lanka runs out of medicine, 31.05.2022. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/may/31/people-are-going-to-die-crisis-hit-sri-lanka-runs-out-of-medicine> (07.03.2023).

⁶ According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), *essential medicines* are medicines that are needed to meet the most urgent healthcare needs of the population. They should be available to all people in adequate quantities, in the correct dosage form, in good quality and at a price that is affordable for the patient. Medicus Mundi Switzerland, Basel. 2021. www.medicusmundi.ch/de/advocacy/publikationen/med-in-switzerland/25-jahre-who-liste-der-unentbehrlichen-arzneimittel (12.04.2023).

⁷ World Health Organisation (WHO), Colombo. List of Out of stock Essential Pharmaceuticals, 19.12.2022.

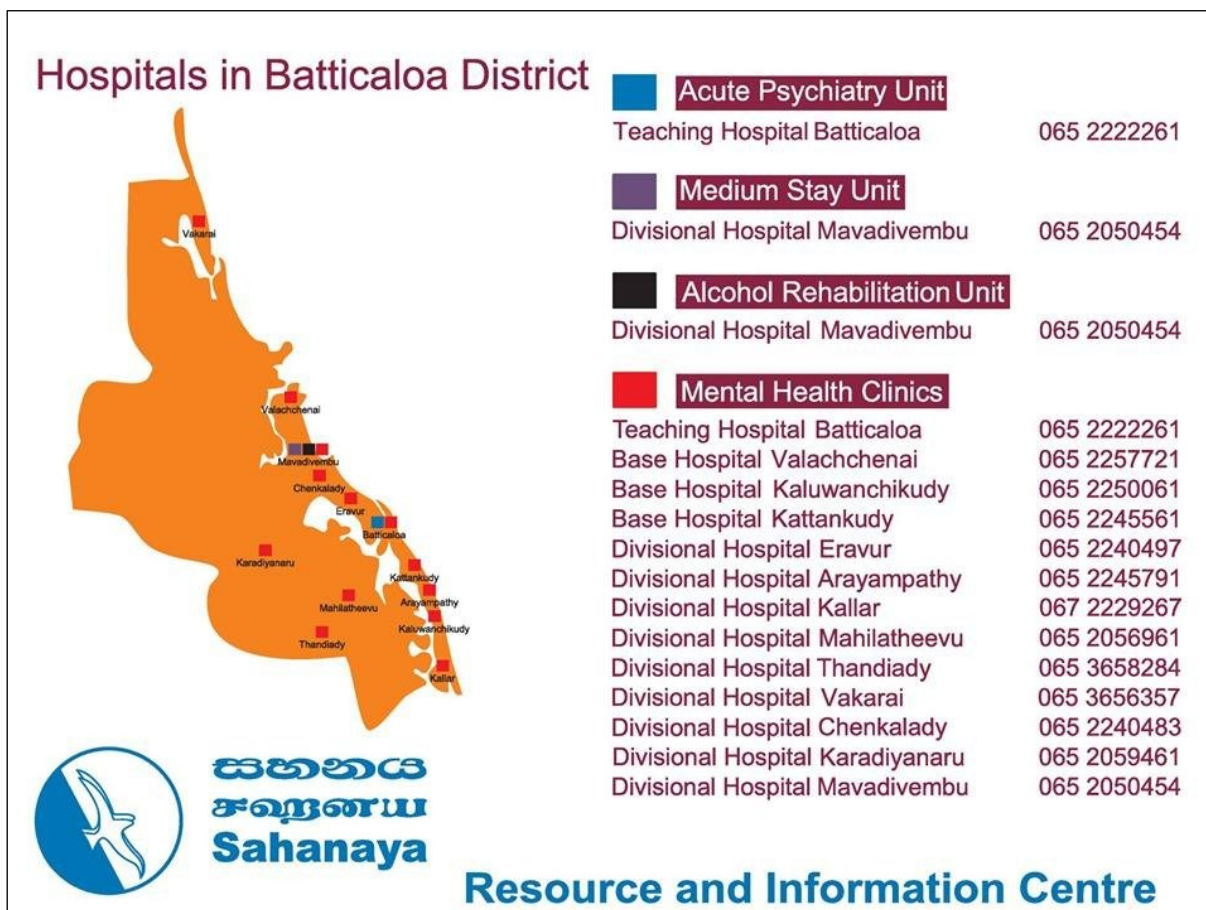
⁸ World Health Organisation (WHO), Colombo. Medical Equipment Request, 2023.

Where possible, the findings were compared with those of the MedCOI project of the European Asylum Agency EUAA and public sources such as the WHO.

The first part of this report provides an overview of the healthcare system and in particular highlights specific Sri Lankan concepts that are sometimes difficult to understand in Switzerland, such as the so-called *clinics* (consultation hours for outpatients), the great importance of private providers, job titles and case studies. The second part documents existing structures and available medicines.

2. State mental health care

Sri Lanka currently has 61 inpatient psychiatric wards for adults, three inpatient psychiatric wards for children and various specialised psychiatric wards. Outpatient psychiatric care is provided by outpatient clinics in specialised hospitals, as well as in the larger primary care hospitals at provincial and district level.⁹ A good overview can be found on the website [Sahanaya Resource and Information Centre \(SRIC\)](#) of the *National Council for Mental Health*.¹⁰ All inpatient psychiatric departments and outpatient *clinics* are listed on the SRIC website and marked on maps (see illustration below).



Website SRIC¹¹, graphic representation of the mental health care in the district of Batticaloa. (Screenshot, 03.2023). © SRIC, Colombo. Authorisation for use received on 16.05.2023.

2.1. Inpatient psychiatric care

The compilations and maps of the *National Council for Mental Health* show that there is at least one acute psychiatric ward in all districts except Mullaitivu (Northern Province) and Puttalam (North Western Province). In densely populated districts such as Colombo or Kandy, there are up to five acute psychiatric wards in state hospitals. In addition to the acute psychiatric wards, most districts also have inpatient psychiatric units for medium length of stay (*medium stay units*) in medium-sized and smaller hospitals.¹²

⁹ World Health Organisation (WHO) Regional Office for South-East, New Delhi. Sri Lanka health system review, 2021. <https://apo.who.int/publications/i/item/sri-lanka-health-system-review> (15.03.2023).

¹⁰ National Council for Mental Health, Sahanaya Resource Information Centre (SRIC). Government Hospitals with psychiatric wards, [undated]. <http://www.sric.lk/page/government-hospitals-with-psychiatric-wards/13> (23/03/2023).

¹¹ National Council for Mental Health, Sahanaya Resource Information Centre (SRIC). Government Hospitals with psychiatric wards, [undated]. <http://www.sric.lk/page/government-hospitals-with-psychiatric-wards/13> (23/03/2023).

¹² National Council for Mental Health, Sahanaya Resource Information Centre (SRIC). Government Hospitals with psychiatric wards, [undated]. <http://www.sric.lk/page/government-hospitals-with-psychiatric-wards/13> (23/03/2023).

The SEM country analysis visited three inpatient psychiatric wards: in a university hospital and in two *base hospitals* in the Northern Province. All three hospitals were simply and functionally furnished. Some of the wards were housed in new or renovated buildings. All inpatient wards visited had common rooms, courtyards or gardens accessible to patients, dining rooms, therapy rooms, occupational therapy, consulting rooms and medical staff rooms. None of the wards visited in February 2023 were fully occupied at the time of the SEM country analysis mission.¹³

The most important inpatient psychiatric facility in the Tamil-speaking region is located in Tellippalai in the Jaffna district. The situation there was as follows in February 2023:

Tellippalai Base Hospital is a specialised hospital for psychiatry and oncology, whereby the acute psychiatric department is affiliated to Jaffna University Hospital, which does not have its own inpatient department. Tellippalai Hospital also houses the psychiatric teaching centre of the Jaffna Medical Faculty.¹⁴

The acute psychiatric ward consists of two U-shaped, single-storey buildings, each with a wing for men and women. Each wing has a capacity of 32 beds and contains a ward room, a pharmacy, two isolation rooms and other ancillary rooms. There is also a large, covered lounge area, two open courtyards, a dining room for patients, rooms for occupational therapy and offices. The outpatient centre houses the waiting area and the consultation rooms for the treatment of outpatients with the associated offices and ancillary rooms. One of the two psychiatric wards was recently renovated. During the SEM country analysis visit, most of the patients were in the inner courtyards. Some were in the rooms, the doors of which were open. Three so-called "forensic patients", i.e. mentally ill offenders, were in closed wards that were visible from the outside.¹⁵



Tellippalai Base Hospital: patient room (left); psychiatry department, inner courtyard with ward room in the centre of the picture (right). © Country analysis SEM.

According to the clinic's head specialist, between 800 and 1,200 patients are treated in Tellippalai's inpatient psychiatric ward every year. On average, 30 to 50 mentally ill offenders are admitted each month. The most common psychiatric conditions are bipolar disorders, followed by post-traumatic stress disorder.¹⁶

Tellippalai Hospital offers psychotherapy. According to the head physician, most patients who need psychotherapy can receive it. Occupational therapy and electroconvulsive therapy are also available. Talking therapies are carried out by a therapist (*counsellor*) from Jaffna.¹⁷

¹³ Findings of the SEM Sri Lanka country analysis mission (Colombo, Northern Province), 02.2023.

¹⁴ Interview with Dr T. Umaharan, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist, Base Hospital, Tellippalai (Jaffna District), 10.03.2023.

¹⁵ Country analysis mission SEM, Base Hospital Tellippalai (Jaffna district), 10.02.2023.

¹⁶ Interview with Dr T. Umaharan, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist, Base Hospital, Tellippalai (Jaffna District), 10.03.2023.

¹⁷ Interview with Dr T. Umaharan, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist, Base Hospital, Tellippalai (Jaffna District), 10.03.2023.

2.2. Outpatient psychiatric care

Outpatient psychiatric care in Sri Lanka is provided by the psychiatric departments of state hospitals. According to the WHO, there are 126 psychiatric outpatient clinics in public hospitals in Sri Lanka, 320 psychiatric *outreach clinics* in local health centres, 61 child psychiatric outpatient clinics and numerous specialised psychiatric outpatient clinics, e.g. for addictions.¹⁸ Maps and compilations by the *National Council for Mental Health* show that there are several psychiatric outpatient clinics in each district of Sri Lanka. Many of these are also located in rural areas.¹⁹

Clinics - Consultation hours for outpatients

The Sri Lankan healthcare system has hardly any GP surgeries. Medical consultations take place in state hospitals every day from around 8 am to 1 pm. Patients arrive at the hospital in the morning, usually before eight o'clock, and sit down in the waiting room of the outpatient clinic of the hospital department responsible for their illness, for example psychiatry. People wait on benches until it is their turn for a consultation. This can take several hours, depending on what time you turn up. The length of the consultation varies greatly. If a patient only wants to renew a prescription for medication, the consultation can take less than two minutes. If, on the other hand, the person is attending the consultation for the first time and the doctor needs to make an initial diagnosis, the consultation can take fifteen minutes or longer. The number of patients who come to the consultation every day varies greatly. In the psychiatry department of the Northern Province, the SEM country analysis observed between 10 and 30 people waiting in the outpatient clinics for an appointment.²⁰ According to the doctors, however, there can also be up to a hundred people a day who are seen and treated by a doctor.²¹ According to the president of the GMOA doctors' union, it is normal for doctors in the public healthcare system to see up to 20 patients per hour. The quality of medical services is nevertheless high, according to the President of the *Government Medical Officers Association* (GMOA).²²

All interviewees emphasised to the SEM country analysis that it hardly ever happens that patients are turned away or that consultations with doctors have to be postponed to the next day. Psychiatric patients usually receive an appointment with a specialist on the same day or within a few days, provided they arrive at the hospital on time in the morning.²³

Some of the consultations in the outpatient centres are carried out by relatives. This is typically the case when a prescription for medication needs to be renewed. In this case, the personal presence of the patient is not absolutely necessary.

Medical consultations in the outpatient clinics of state hospitals are free of charge. Patients do not have to register and can decide for themselves which hospital they go to. According to a senior psychiatrist in Jaffna, it is quite common for patients to be treated by a particular doctor in a hospital that is not close to their place of residence.²⁴

Specialists sometimes hold their consultations in different hospitals. As a result, consultations for outpatients with specific illnesses, such as addiction, are only offered on certain days of the week. In the Jaffna district, psychiatric *consultants* are available for consultations on different days at Jaffna University Hospital and three other hospitals in the district.²⁵

¹⁸ World Health Organisation (WHO) Regional Office for South-East, New Delhi. Addressing mental health in Sri Lanka, 06.09.2022. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789290210221> (30.03.2023).

¹⁹ National Council for Mental Health, Sahanaya Resource Information Centre (SRIC). Government Hospitals with psychiatric wards, [undated]. <http://www.sric.lk/page/government-hospitals-with-psychiatric-wards/13> (23/03/2023).

²⁰ Findings of the SEM Sri Lanka country analysis mission (Colombo, Northern Province), 02.2023.

²¹ Interview with Dr Mahesan Ganesan, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist, Jaffna, 08.02.2023.

²² Interview with Dr Darshana Sirisena, President, several committee members, Government Medical Officers Association (GMOA), Colombo, 13.02.2023.

²³ Interview with Dr Mahesan Ganesan, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist, Jaffna, 08.02.2023.

²⁴ Interview with Prof. Sambasivamoorthy Sivayokan, Professor of Psychiatry, University of Jaffna, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist, Jaffna University Hospital / Tellippalai, Jaffna, 10.02.2023.

²⁵ Findings of the SEM Sri Lanka country analysis mission (Colombo, Northern Province), 02.2023.

Various types of specialised consultation hours (*clinics*) are offered in psychiatry: For adult general patients, for children and adolescents, for geriatric patients and for drug and alcohol addicts.



Jaffna University Hospital, psychiatry department, waiting areas for outpatients. © Country analysis SEM.

The psychiatric outpatient clinics in the large university hospitals or the main hospitals in the provinces (*Provincial General Hospitals*) are open daily. As the example of Jaffna University Hospital shows, they also offer daily consultations in the psychiatric departments. In Jaffna, this is the paediatric psychiatry department. At the large hospitals, several psychiatric specialists and a team of therapists are available for consultations every day.²⁶

Outpatient clinics in regional hospitals are usually run by trained psychiatrists and supervised by psychiatric *consultants* from university or provincial hospitals. One example of this is the psychiatric outpatient centre at the *Base Hospital* in Chavakachcheri, one of four *Base Hospitals* in the Jaffna district:

The psychiatric outpatient clinic at the hospital in Chavakachcheri is run by a qualified psychiatrist and supervised by a senior consultant/professor of psychiatry at Jaffna University Hospital. It is housed in an outbuilding on the hospital grounds. The waiting area with benches for outpatients is located under a canopy, and there are several consulting rooms and offices in the building.²⁷

The psychiatric outpatient centre in Chavakachcheri has the following weekly schedule:²⁸

- Monday: Psychiatric outpatient clinic with a qualified psychiatrist.
- Tuesday: Outpatient centre for addicts (drugs).
- Wednesday: "Large" psychiatric outpatient clinic with a senior consultant psychiatrist from Jaffna

²⁶ Jaffna Teaching Hospital, Jaffna. Visit to psychiatry department, 08.02.2023.

²⁷ Country analysis mission SEM, Base Hospital Chavakachcheri (Jaffna district), 08.02.2023.

²⁸ Interview with Dr S. Kumaravel, Medical Superintendent, Base Hospital, Chavakachcheri, 08.02.2023.

Thursday: Outpatient psychiatric clinic with a qualified psychiatrist in a smaller hospital (*Divisional Hospital / Primary Medical Care Unit*)
 Friday: Outpatient psychiatric clinic with a qualified psychiatrist in a smaller hospital (*Divisional Hospital / Primary Medical Care Unit*)
 Saturday: Outpatient centre for addicts (alcohol)
 Public holidays (*Poya Day*): Meeting for addicts (alcohol)

On the day of the SEM country analysis visit, a Wednesday, a senior *consultant* psychiatrist from Jaffna, the responsible qualified psychiatrist and several nursing staff were present in the outpatient centre. At 10 o'clock in the morning, an estimated 20 to 30 psychiatric patients were waiting in the waiting area of the outpatient centre. They were received in two consulting rooms.²⁹

The outpatient clinic for addicts, the so-called "*Healing Centre*", is located in an adjoining building on the hospital grounds. Addiction patients are admitted and treated here in several rooms on two floors on the days of the outpatient centre.³⁰

Psychiatric consultations in *Divisional Hospitals* and *Primary Medical Care Units*, the two lowest categories of hospitals or health posts in the Sri Lankan health system, are usually offered on certain days of the week by psychiatric teams from the higher-level *Base Hospitals*. In the above example of the hospital in Chavakachcheri, the psychiatric consultations take place on Thursdays and Fridays in the surrounding *Divisional Hospitals* and *Primary Medical Care Units*.³¹

2.3. Hospital of the *National Institute of Mental Health*, Angoda

The *National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)* in Angoda near Colombo is the largest psychiatric hospital in Sri Lanka. It is one of the country's *Special Hospitals* and is recognised as a national reference hospital for psychiatry. The hospital has 1400 beds in 42 departments. Of these, 1100 beds were occupied in February 2023.³² Between 5000 and 6000 new patients are admitted every year. In February 2023, the NIMH employed nine senior *consultants* in psychiatry, six *senior registrars* in psychiatry, three *registrars* in psychiatry in training, 72 *medical officers* in psychiatry and 439 nurses.³³

There are a large number of specialised departments, including eight acute psychiatric departments, six departments for patients with intermediate length of stay, a department for long-term psychiatric care, a department for intensive psychiatric care, a department for people with dementia, one for people with learning disabilities, the department for perinatal psychiatry, the forensic psychiatry department for mentally ill offenders, a clinic for victims of sexual violence and a hotline for psychiatric emergencies. The NIMH also runs a psychiatric day clinic where patients are cared for during the day and return home in the evening.³⁴

The psychiatric outpatient centre of the NIMH is located in the *National Hospital* in Colombo. It is open daily. According to the doctors in charge, all psychiatric conditions, including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), can be treated at the NIMH.³⁵ The NIMH is a psychiatric training centre for undergraduate medical students and trainee psychiatrists in specialist training. It organises medical congresses on psychiatry, often with international participation.

The NIMH in Angoda is housed in buildings, some of which are almost a hundred years old. They date back to a time when psychiatric patients were mainly locked away and detained.

²⁹ Country analysis mission SEM, Base Hospital Chavakachcheri (Jaffna district), 08.02.2023.

³⁰ Interview with Dr S. Kumaravel, Medical Superintendent, Base Hospital, Chavakachcheri, 08.02.2023.

³¹ Country analysis mission SEM, Base Hospital Chavakachcheri (Jaffna District), 08.02.2023 / Findings country analysis mission SEM Sri Lanka (Colombo, Northern Province), 02.2023.

³² Interview with Dr Pushpa Ranasinghe, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist, Dr Ishan De Zoysa, National Institute for Mental Health (NIMH), Angoda, 15.02.2023.

³³ Interview with Dr Pushpa Ranasinghe, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist, Dr Ishan De Zoysa, National Institute for Mental Health (NIMH), Angoda, 15.02.2023.

³⁴ Interview with Dr Pushpa Ranasinghe, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist, Dr Ishan De Zoysa, National Institute for Mental Health (NIMH), Angoda, 15.02.2023.

³⁵ Interview with Dr Pushpa Ranasinghe, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist, Dr Ishan De Zoysa, National Institute for Mental Health (NIMH), Angoda, 15.02.2023.

Today, however, most of the wards are open, i.e. patients can move freely within the ward or on the hospital grounds. The departments for long-term psychiatric care are designed as medium-sized houses in which groups of patients live together. Many departments have communal rooms, occupational therapy and rooms for visits from relatives. In many departments, patients have access to gardens and landscaped courtyards.³⁶

In a report on Sri Lankan television in 2020, the head psychiatrist Dr M. Ganesan, who himself worked as a *consultant* at NIMH Angoda, criticised the fact that too many patients in Angoda are still restricted in their freedom of movement. This was because not all rooms were adapted to modern therapy concepts. In addition, due to a general shortage of therapists (*counsellors*) and psychotherapists, not all patients receive the necessary talking therapies. Dr P. Ranasinghe, also a *consultant* psychiatrist at NIMH Angoda, emphasises in the TV report that many new therapy concepts have been implemented at NIMH Angoda in recent years. These include drama and music therapy, therapeutic gardening and a new department for gender incongruence, which was set up at the NIMH.³⁷

³⁶ Country analysis mission SEM, National Institute for Mental Health (NIMH), Angoda, 15 February 2023.

³⁷ *What Really Goes on inside Angoda Hospital? Pulse Angoda*, Colombo, 2020.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2TuxnbCTvJY> (27.03.2023).



NIMH Angoda (clockwise): Main wing from 1925; common room of the perinatal psychiatry department; visiting room; department for long-term psychiatric care, houses for residential groups. © Country analysis SEM.

2.4. Centres for psychiatric rehabilitation

There are 22 psychiatric rehabilitation centres in Sri Lanka: medium-stay facilities (six months) and longer-stay facilities (over a year). Medium-stay centres are suitable for people who do not require intensive medical treatment but need treatment and support in developing life skills and social and vocational reintegration into society. An important part of rehabilitation is occupational therapy, which teaches life and work skills. Rehabilitation centres focus on learning everyday skills such as self-care, cooking and cleaning. Most rehabilitation centres are located in hospitals and their management can vary from district to district.³⁸

One example of a psychiatric rehabilitation centre with a medium length of stay is the *Kudil Residential Rehabilitation Centre* in the Jaffna district near Tellippalai, which the SEM country analysis visited in February 2023. The Kudil Centre is affiliated to the university psychiatry department of Tellippalai Hospital and is run by the head psychiatrist there.³⁹ It was financed and built by the North American non-governmental organisation *International Medical Health Organization*,⁴⁰ in which mainly Tamil doctors in North America are involved. Since its foundation in 2007, the centre has been housed in rented buildings; the newly built complex in Tellippalai was opened in 2022. The centre prepares chronically mentally ill patients for a return to their home environment for an average of around six months.⁴¹

³⁸ World Health Organisation (WHO) Regional Office for South-East, New Delhi. Sri Lanka health system review, 2021. <https://apo.who.int/publications/i/item/sri-lanka-health-system-review> (15.03.2023). / Department of Health Services (ed.), *Resurgence*. Brochure on the "Kudil" centre, Jaffna, 2017.

³⁹ Interview with Dr T. Umaharan, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist, Base Hospital, Tellippalai (Jaffna District), 10.03.2023.

⁴⁰ International Medical Health Organisation (IMHO), Worthington (OH). "Kudil" - Residential Rehabilitation Unit for the Mental Health services, Tellipalai, Jaffna District, [undated]. <https://theimho.org/kudil-residential-rehabilitation-unit-for-the-mental-health-services-tellipalai-jaffna-district/> (23/03/2023).

⁴¹ Interview with Dr T. Umaharan, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist, Base Hospital, Tellippalai (Jaffna District), 10.03.2023.

At the Kudil Centre, patients learn to master their everyday lives again under the guidance of social workers. The programme is developed individually and discussed with relatives. They are encouraged to visit the patients regularly and support them in their reintegration. The programme includes cooking, housework, personal hygiene and shopping. The patients also take part in therapies and have regular consultations with psychiatric specialists.⁴²

The newly opened Kudil centre is well equipped and has spacious, bright rooms. There is a residential wing for women and one for men, a main wing with a communal room, communal kitchen, therapy rooms, offices and other ancillary rooms. In the inner courtyard there is a large vegetable garden, which is cultivated by the patients themselves, a volleyball court and sheltered places to relax.⁴³



Kudil Telippallai (clockwise): Inner courtyard; residential wing; communal kitchen; common room. © Country analysis SEM.

A patient at the Kudil Centre in Tellippalai told the SEM country analysis that she was a trained nurse and had worked for a long time in a *base hospital* in the Jaffna district. She had emigrated to a western country and became mentally ill there. After her return to Jaffna, she was admitted to a psychiatric hospital. She considers herself cured and has now been learning to cope with everyday life at the Kudil Centre for about five months. She will return home in a few weeks. She has already been promised that she will be able to work again as a nurse in a hospital in the northern province.⁴⁴

⁴² Department of Health Services (ed.), *Resurgence*. Brochure on the "Kudil" centre, Jaffna, 2017.

⁴³ Tellippalai (Jaffna district). analysis SEM at Kudil Residential Rehabilitation Centre, visit Kudil, 10.02.2023.

⁴⁴ Tellippalai (Jaffna district). analysis SEM at Kudil Residential Rehabilitation Centre. Visit Kudil, 10.02.2023.

There are similar rehabilitation centres for the mentally ill affiliated to state hospitals in at least nine other districts in Sri Lanka.⁴⁵

In addition to these state-run rehabilitation centres, non-governmental organisations such as *Nest* and *Sahanaya* also run their own facilities.⁴⁶ The *National Council for Mental Health* (NCMH) mentions 40 private centres for the reintegration of the mentally ill into society on its website. Many of these private centres are located in the Western Province and in the centre of the country.⁴⁷ NCMH itself runs a private reintegration centre in Gorakana, a southern suburb of Colombo. In an individual programme, social skills and a sense of responsibility and discipline are taught so that patients can reintegrate into society and find employment, according to NCMH.⁴⁸

2.5. Psychotrauma Centre / Centre for Welfare and Recovery

In Mankulam in the district of Mullaitivu, in the middle of the former conflict zone, a centre for psychologically traumatised patients has been built on the grounds of the local hospital (*Base Hospital*). The project is funded by the Dutch government along with three other hospital projects in the Northern Province. It is part of a global programme by the Dutch government to promote reconciliation.⁴⁹

The centre includes a day clinic for psychiatric patients, treatment rooms, a therapeutic garden and staff rooms. It is run by the Sri Lankan Ministry of Health. The Dutch government supports the training of medical staff through the non-governmental organisation *Global Initiative on Psychiatry*.⁵⁰

The centre is scheduled to open in 2023. Psychiatrists, therapists (*counsellors*) and social workers will work at the centre. Several interviewees from the SEM country analysis in the Northern Province have already been trained to work at the *Centre for Welfare and Recovery* or were involved in training the staff.⁵¹

The centre will be called the *Centre for Welfare and Recovery*. *Psycho Trauma Centre* was the working title of the project.⁵²

2.6. Telephone counselling centres for people with mental health problems

In Sri Lanka, there is a national helpline for people with mental health problems, which can be reached around the clock in Singalese, Tamil and English on the free phone number 1926. According to its website, the helpline is there for all people in Sri Lanka who are struggling with anxiety, depression, grief and loss, loneliness, self-harm, stress, suicide, trauma and PTSD and are looking for help.⁵³ Helpline 1926 is run by a team of specially trained nurses who can be contacted by phone or chat via WhatsApp. The helpline specialists primarily listen to the callers, try to calm them down in stressful situations and, if necessary, refer them to psychiatric

⁴⁵ National Council for Mental Health, Sahanaya Resource Information Centre (SRIC), Colombo. Government hospitals with Rehabilitation Units, [undated]. <http://www.sric.lk/page/government-hospitals-with-rehabilitation-units/33> (23/03/2023).

⁴⁶ World Health Organisation (WHO) Regional Office for South-East, New Delhi. Sri Lanka health system review, 2021. <https://apo.who.int/publications/i/item/sri-lanka-health-system-review> (15.03.2023).

⁴⁷ National Council for Mental Health, Sahanaya Resource Information Centre (SRIC), Colombo. Private Rehabilitation Centres, [undated]. <https://sric.lk/page/private-rehabilitation-centres/14> (23.03.2023).

⁴⁸ National Council for Mental Health, Sahanaya Resource Information Centre (SRIC), Colombo. Gorakana Residential Facility, [undated]. <http://www.ncmh.lk/page/gorakana-residential-facility/55> (23/03/2023).

⁴⁹ Interview with Anouk Baron, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of the Netherlands in Sri Lanka, Colombo, 14 February 2023.

⁵⁰ Interview with Anouk Baron, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of the Netherlands in Sri Lanka, Colombo, 14 February 2023.

⁵¹ Findings of the SEM Sri Lanka country analysis mission (Colombo, Northern Province), 02.2023.

⁵² Interview with Anouk Baron, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of the Netherlands in Sri Lanka, Colombo, 14 February 2023.

⁵³ National Institute for Mental Health (NIMH). 1926 - National Mental Health Helpline. 1926 Helpline, [undated]. <https://findahelpline.com/organizations/1926-national-mental-health-helpline> (27/03/2023).

specialists in all regions of Sri Lanka. In 2022, the helpline recorded a total of 20,166 calls. This corresponds to 1,500 to 2,500 calls per month.⁵⁴



NIMH Angoda: Staff and workstation of the national psychiatric helpline 1926 © Country Analysis SEM.

The non-governmental organisation *Abayam* operates a regional helpline in Tamil in the Northern Province on 071 071 2345. It was set up in 2020 in response to the high suicide rate in the region.⁵⁵ The helpline is staffed by trained therapists/coaches (*counsellors*). They can refer callers to social workers and psychiatrists in Jaffna if necessary. The most common concerns of callers are personal crises and suicidal thoughts due to relationship problems and domestic violence. During the coronavirus pandemic, the helpline's services were in particularly high demand in the Northern Province.⁵⁶ The psychiatric university hospital in Tellippalai also operates a helpline for people with mental health problems in the Jaffna district.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Country analysis mission SEM, National Institute for Mental Health (NIMH), Angoda, 15 February 2023.

⁵⁵ Abayam, Edgware (UK). Abayam-Foundation for Health and Education, [undated]. <http://www.abayam.org/> (27/03/2023).

⁵⁶ Interview with a senior consultant psychiatrist, Northern Province, 09/02/2023.

⁵⁷ Interview with Dr T. Umaharan, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist, Base Hospital, Tellippalai (Jaffna District), 10.03.2023.

மனநெருக்கீடுகளில்
இருப்பவர்களுக்கு
உடனடி தொலைபேசி
வைத்திய ஆலோசனை
வழங்கும் சேவை.

24 மணி நேர அரவு மகல் சேவை
எந்தநேரமும் ஒரு வைத்தியரை உடனடியாக தொடர்பு கொள்ளலாம்.

தங்களில் வற்புறுக்கும் சுவரங்கள் தொகுப்பைத் தவிர்த்தல் இலட்சியமாக இயங்கும்

நீங்கள் தொடர்பு கொள்ள வேண்டிய அணக்கம் **071 071 2345**

துறை சார் மருத்துவர்களும், குழுவினரும் உங்களை ஆறுதல் படுத்தி
தீர்வு காண்பதற்கு / வழிகாட்டுவதற்கு தயாராக உள்ளனர் .

மனநெருக்கடிகளுக்கு உள்ளானவர்களை காண்பவர்கள் இத்
தொலைபேசி சேவையை பெற்றுக் கொள்ள அக்கப்படுத்துங்கள்.

இச் சேவையானது முற்றிலும் இலவசமான மருத்துவ சேவையாக
அபயம் நிறுவனத்தினால் மேற்கொள்ளப்பட்டு வருகின்றது.

அபயம் - கல்வி மற்றும் உடல் நலம் சார்ந்த அறக்கட்டளை அமைப்பு
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அபயம் நிறுவனம்
மனநலம், வாழ்வு, கல்வி

Flyer of the Tamil-speaking mental health helpline of Abayam. © Abayam, permission for use received on 31.05.2023.

2.7. Care for patients at home

In a 2022 report, the WHO found that outpatient mental health services are working successfully in all districts. Mobile teams administer the necessary treatment and medication, including depot injections, at home to people who have difficulty accessing services due to the severity of their illness, their poverty or for other reasons, according to the WHO.⁵⁸

In the Jaffna district, for example, the *mobile clinic* is organised as follows: A team from the psychiatry department at Tellippalai Hospital, consisting of a general psychiatrist, a psychiatric nurse and a psychiatric social worker, visits patients by car in villages without health centres and at home. There they distribute and administer medication and identify patients who require inpatient treatment. In the Jaffna district, between 600 and 800 patients are cared for in this way every month.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ World Health Organisation (WHO) Regional Office for South-East, New Delhi. Addressing mental health in Sri Lanka, 06.09.2022. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789290210221> (30.03.2023).

⁵⁹ Interview with Dr T. Umaharan, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist, Base Hospital, Tellippalai (Jaffna District), 10.03.2023.

Case study: Patient with depression in Jaffna who has relatives abroad

A 70-year-old woman from the Jaffna district fell ill with severe depression in 2019. She suffered from anxiety and panic attacks. Two years ago, she also had to undergo an operation. Many of the woman's close relatives live in various European countries. A niece is her closest carer in Sri Lanka. The woman lives in a small village about 25 kilometres from the city of Jaffna.⁶⁰

After the onset of the mental illness, it took about six months for the family to accept that the woman was mentally ill and needed psychiatric help. The stigma of mental illness is high and the family's fear of what their neighbours might think if they found out that their relative was being treated in a psychiatric hospital was great. Relatives living abroad were also involved in the decision to see a psychiatrist. In the end, the family decided to take the patient to a *consultant* psychiatrist in a private hospital in Jaffna. The family decided in favour of a private facility because a consultation in a private hospital was more convenient for the relatives and the patient and because special attention was expected from the doctor in a private hospital. At the beginning, the patient's state of health was such that she did not want to wait several hours for a consultation. The relatives wanted the doctor to be able to take enough time for diagnosis and treatment.

The private consultations with a senior *consultant* psychiatrist lasted 15 to 20 minutes each. In the first six months after the diagnosis, the relatives initially visited the psychiatric outpatient clinic in a state hospital, where the same psychiatrist also practised, every fortnight and later once a month. Based on the feedback from the relatives about the patient's state of health and behaviour, the doctor prescribed medication, which the family obtained from a private pharmacy in Jaffna. All medication was always available without restriction during the entire treatment period (2019 - 2023). The psychiatrist discussed the diagnosis and treatment strategy several times with the patient's relatives, including those living abroad. In addition to antidepressants, he prescribed her counselling therapy. This was carried out by a trained, Tamil-speaking therapist (*counsellor*) and paid for privately by the family. In addition, the family employed a nurse to conduct home visits to ensure closer care for the patient even in the absence of her relatives. After a year, the family changed the private external nursing service, as the 24-hour care originally provided was no longer necessary.

The patient and her relatives incurred the following costs:

- Private consultation with a psychiatrist: 1500-2000 LKR (4.30-5.70 CHF) per consultation.
- Follow-up consultations with the psychiatrist at the state hospital: free of charge.
- Medication (antidepressants), obtained from a pharmacy in Jaffna: 7000 - 10 000 LKR. (20 - 28 CHF) per month.
- Nursing care at home: 3500 LKR (10 CHF) per 24 hours.

Relatives living in Europe concluded a contract directly with the private care service for external nursing care and paid it from abroad.

The patient is now doing better and the dose of medication has been reduced. The family was satisfied with the psychiatric treatment, both in public and in private. Only the therapist had to be changed in the course of the treatment, as there were problems in the interpersonal relationship between him and the patient.

3. Private mental health care

According to the WHO, studies show that the quality of healthcare in the public and private healthcare systems in Sri Lanka is comparable. The private sector provides 50% of outpatient and 5% of inpatient healthcare. The private sector offers patients a number of advantages. These include the timely availability of services and the absence of waiting lists. The ability to choose the specialist of their choice and the continuity of care from the same person are also cited as important reasons for using private sector services. According to the WHO, the greater

⁶⁰ Interview with relatives of a psychiatric patient, Jaffna district, 10/02/2023.

discretion in private facilities compared to public hospitals is an important factor in patients' decision to utilise private sector services.⁶¹

The majority of doctors in private practice also work in the public healthcare system. In 2015, the WHO counted 4845 part-time doctors of all specialities in the private sector who also worked in the public healthcare system. 424 doctors work exclusively in the private sector.⁶² The majority of the psychiatric specialists surveyed by the SEM country analysis in February 2023 in Colombo and the Northern Province also practised privately.⁶³

3.1. Outpatient psychiatric care

Working hours in the public healthcare system are from around 8 am to 4 pm. After that, i.e. in the late afternoon and evening, many doctors practise in private clinics. It is therefore possible to obtain private medical consultations even from professors or Deans of medical faculties.⁶⁴ A few highly specialised doctors at the large private hospitals in Colombo work exclusively privately at a single hospital.⁶⁵ The concept of the family doctor with his own practice, which is widespread in Switzerland, is practically unknown in Sri Lanka.⁶⁶ Psychiatric specialists and clinical psychologists offer consultation hours in private hospitals, e.g. in the private *Kings Hospital*⁶⁷ in Colombo, which was visited by the SEM country analysis.⁶⁸

Book doctor's appointments at a private clinic online

Private medical appointments in Sri Lanka are mainly organised via the popular [eChannelling](#) app and website.⁶⁹ The application offers the following functions:

- Search for doctors by name, place of work and specialisation;
- Search for clinics and the doctors working there;
- Direct booking of medical appointments;
- Display of prices for the consultation;
- Direct payment of medical consultations in the app;
- Display of doctors' profiles and specialisations as well as their places of work - doctors often practice privately in different clinics.

Doctor's appointments are almost always available on the same day in eChannelling, especially in Colombo, where the choice of private practitioners is very large. Appointments with highly qualified psychiatrists, such as Dr Chathurie Suraweera, whom the SEM country analysis met during a visit to the University of Colombo's Faculty of Medicine, can also be booked via eChannelling.⁷⁰ Suraweera is a *consultant* psychiatrist and *senior lecturer* in psychiatry at the University of Colombo. She has undergone further training in the UK.⁷¹

Another platform for booking doctor's appointments is Doc990 (<https://www.doc.lk/>). In mid-March 2023, several hundred appointments with psychiatrists in 69 hospitals and clinics could be booked via Doc990. Appointments with over 5000 doctors in 140 hospitals in Sri Lanka can be booked and billed online via Doc990. Doc990 also has an app.⁷²

⁶¹ World Health Organisation (WHO) Regional Office for South-East, New Delhi. Sri Lanka health system review, 2021. <https://apo.who.int/publications/i/item/sri-lanka-health-system-review> (15.03.2023).

⁶² World Health Organisation (WHO) Regional Office for South-East, New Delhi. Sri Lanka health system review, 2021. <https://apo.who.int/publications/i/item/sri-lanka-health-system-review> (15.03.2023).

⁶³ Findings of the SEM Sri Lanka country analysis mission (Colombo, Northern Province), 02.2023.

⁶⁴ Findings of the SEM Sri Lanka country analysis mission (Colombo, Northern Province), 02.2023.

⁶⁵ Visit country analysis SEM, Kings Hospital, Colombo, 14 February 2023. <https://www.kingshospital.lk/> (24 March 2023).

⁶⁶ Findings of the SEM Sri Lanka country analysis mission (Colombo, Northern Province), 02.2023.

⁶⁷ Visit country analysis SEM, Kings Hospital, Colombo, 14 February 2023. <https://www.kingshospital.lk/> (24 March 2023).

⁶⁸ Interview with Charith Dissanayaka, Manager Consultant Relations & Business Development, Kings Hospital, Colombo, 14 February 2023.

⁶⁹ Mobitel (PVT), Colombo. eChannelling, Homepage, [undated]. <https://www.echannelling.com/> (10.03.2023).

⁷⁰ Mobitel (PVT); eChannelling, Colombo. Channel Dr Chathurie Suraweera, 2023. <https://www.echannelling.com/doctor-sessions?D5237~channel-doctor-chathurie> (01.05.2023).

⁷¹ University of Colombo, Faculty of Medicine, Colombo. Dr Chathurie Suraweera, [undated]. <https://www.res.cmb.ac.lk/psychiatry/chathurie.suraweera/> (10.03.2023).

⁷² Digital Health Private Ltd, Colombo. Doc990. About us, [undated]. <https://www.doc.lk/about> (13/03/2023).

3.2. Inpatient psychiatric care

Colombo's large private hospitals currently have an acute psychiatric ward at *Park Hospital*. *King's Hospital* is also planning to open an acute psychiatric ward by the end of 2023.⁷³ *Park Hospital* in Colombo operates a round-the-clock *mind wellness* clinic. It is run by psychiatrists, psychologists and general practitioners.⁷⁴

According to various interviewees, the *Northern Central Hospital* in Jaffna is the leading private hospital in the Northern Province.⁷⁵ *The Northern Central Hospital* treats a wide range of medical conditions, including psychiatric illnesses. Prof Sivayokan from Jaffna University Hospital is one of the psychiatrists practising at the *Northern Central Hospital*. Consultations with him take place on Tuesdays and Wednesdays after 6 pm and on Saturdays after 4 pm. Another senior consultant psychiatrist works there on Tuesdays and Thursdays.⁷⁶ According to Prof Sivayokan, appointments with him at the *Northern Central Hospital* are usually available without long waiting times. A consultation costs 1500 LKR (4 CHF), regardless of the duration. Private patients are free to decide how many consultations they book. Prof Sivayokan also works at the private *Suharni Hospital* in Jaffna.⁷⁷

3.3. Private care services (Spitex)

In Sri Lanka, there are several private providers of nursing care for patients in their own homes. *Certis Lanka Home Nursing and Swift Care (Pvt) Ltd* is a nationwide nursing service.⁷⁸ *Certis* provides trained nursing staff to care for patients in their own homes. They take care of personal hygiene, administration of medication, monitoring of health status and nutrition.⁷⁹ *Certis* is active in the Northern Province, where it also cares for and looks after mentally ill people.⁸⁰

There are two local providers of home care in the Jaffna district: *TS 3 Home Nursing Service* and *Venus Home Nursing*. These employ both trained nurses and auxiliary staff without nursing training.⁸¹ Many of the employers of these private nursing services are relatives of patients in Jaffna who live abroad. As they are unable to look after their often elderly relatives themselves from abroad, they make use of this care service.⁸²

The cost of home care at *Certis* is 3500 - 3750 LKR (10 CHF) per 24 hours, the other two local providers are slightly cheaper.⁸³

4. Treatment options

Counselling - Talking therapy / Support / Coaching

Counsellors work in all of the psychiatry departments visited by the SEM country analysis. Talking *therapy/counselling* is often prescribed as a therapy by psychiatrists in Sri Lanka.

In the British healthcare system, which the Sri Lankan system is based on, *counselling* is described as follows:⁸⁴ *Counselling* is a talking therapy in which a trained therapist listens to

⁷³ Visit country analysis SEM, Kings Hospital, Colombo, 14 February 2023. <https://www.kingshospital.lk/> (24 March 2023).

⁷⁴ Neptune Health, Colombo. Neptune Healthcare - Mind Wellness, Rehab & Long-Term Medical Care Centre for Terminally Ill, [undated]. <http://neptunehealth.lk/> (24.03.2023).

⁷⁵ Northern Central Hospital, Jaffna. Homepage, [undated]. <https://nchjaffna.com/index.php> (21/03/2023).

⁷⁶ Northern Central Hospital, Jaffna. Clinics. Selection: "Psychiatrist" and "This Week", [undated]. <https://nchjaffna.com/clinics.php> (21/03/2023).

⁷⁷ Interview with Prof. Sambasivamoorthy Sivayokan, Jaffna, 10.02.2023.

⁷⁸ Certis Lanka Home Nursing and Swift Care (Pvt) Ltd, Colombo. Homepage, [undated]. <https://www.certislankanursing.com/> (25/03/2023).

⁷⁹ Certis Lanka Home Nursing and Swift Care (Pvt) Ltd, Colombo. Services, [undated]. <https://www.certislankanursing.com/services/> (25/03/2023).

⁸⁰ Interview with relatives of a psychiatric patient, Jaffna district, 10/02/2023.

⁸¹ Interview with relatives of a psychiatric patient, Jaffna district, 10/02/2023.

⁸² Findings of the SEM Sri Lanka country analysis mission (Colombo, Northern Province), 02.2023.

⁸³ Findings of the SEM Sri Lanka country analysis mission (Colombo, Northern Province), 02.2023.

⁸⁴ National Health Service (UK), London. Counselling, 08.12.2020. <https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/talking-therapies-medicine-treatments/talking-therapies-and-counselling/counselling/> (13.03.2023).

patients and helps them to find ways of dealing with emotional problems. *Counselling* can help patients to deal with the following situations:

- For mental illnesses such as depression, anxiety or an eating disorder;
- in the case of a worrying physical illness, such as infertility;
- in the event of a difficult life event, such as bereavement, a broken relationship or work-related stress;
- with difficult feelings - for example, low self-esteem or anger;
- for other problems, such as those related to sexual identity.

The *counsellors* at Jaffna University Hospital mainly carry out talking therapies prescribed by psychiatrists. The number of therapies/counselling sessions and the duration of the therapies vary from case to case. Individual patients come directly to the *counsellors* at the University Hospital. They (the counsellors) carry out a brief assessment and refer the patients to the psychiatrists for a more precise diagnosis. In the therapy sessions, the *counsellors* address the patient's psychological problems, private environment, fears and anxieties and help them to find solutions and coping strategies. If necessary, family members are also included in the therapy. Social workers can also be involved in the therapy. Some patients receive long-term therapy. The most common illnesses treated in Jaffna are depression, suicidal behaviour and family problems. One member of staff is trained in the treatment of PTSD. Another member of staff specialises in relaxation therapy.⁸⁵

The training paths of the three *counsellors* met by the SEM country analysis at Jaffna University Hospital are different: one woman is a qualified nurse with additional training in psychiatric nursing. She is the team leader of all *counsellors* at the university hospital. Another *counsellor* has completed training in psychology and *counselling* at a private university, and the third was trained in counselling by the non-governmental organisation *Shanthiham*⁸⁶ from Jaffna.⁸⁷

4.1. Therapies

Standard psychiatric-psychological treatments⁸⁸ are available. These include short and long-term inpatient treatment as well as outpatient consultations and counselling therapies. In addition, therapeutic teams visit patients at home in so-called *mobile clinics*. This also reaches people who are unable to attend a clinic for health or other reasons or who do not wish to attend a psychiatric clinic or consultation due to fear of stigmatisation.⁸⁹ A non-exhaustive overview of the treatment programmes can be found in the appendix 2.

4.2. Electroconvulsive therapy

Some of the psychiatric facilities visited offer electroconvulsive therapy (ECT)⁹⁰ as a treatment option. It is particularly effective for severe depressive disorders.⁹¹ The therapy has been around for many decades.⁹² Long associated with a stigma, ECT has since changed in terms

⁸⁵ Interview with Counsellors, Jaffna Teaching Hospital, 08.02.2023.

⁸⁶ LinkedIn, Sunnyvale (USA). Shanthiham. Shanthiham Association for Health & Counselling, 2023. <https://www.linkedin.com/company/shanthiham> (13.03.2023).

⁸⁷ Interview with Counsellors, Jaffna Teaching Hospital, 08.02.2023.

⁸⁸ MSD Manuals, New York. Treatment of Mental Illness. 09.2022. www.msdmanuals.com/home/mental-health-disorders/overview-of-mental-health-care/treatment-of-mental-illness (05.04.2023).

⁸⁹ Findings of the SEM Sri Lanka country analysis mission (Colombo, Northern Province), 02.2023.

⁹⁰ Psychiatric Services Aargau, Windisch. Electroconvulsive therapy, 2023. <https://www.pdag.ch/fuer-patientinnen-patienten-und-angehoerige/alle-angebote/elektrokonvulsionstherapie> (31.03.2023).

⁹¹ Mayo Clinic, Rochester. Electroconvulsive therapy (ECT), 2023. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/electroconvulsive-therapy/about/pac-20393894> (31/03/2023). / Findings of the SEM Sri Lanka country analysis mission (Colombo, Northern Province), 02.2023. / Interview with Dr Jeyaraja, qualified specialist in psychiatry, Kilinochchi, 09.02.2023. / Interview with Dr T. Umaharan, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist, Base Hospital, Tellippalai (Jaffna District), 10.03.2023. / Interview with Dr Pushpa Ranasinghe, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist, Dr Ishan De Zoysa, National Institute for Mental Health (NIMH), Angoda, 15.02.2023.

⁹² Gábor Gazdag, Budapest. Electroconvulsive therapy: 80 years old and still going strong. In: World Journal of Psychiatry. 04.01.2019. Vol. 9(1). <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6323557/pdf/WJP-9-1.pdf> (30.03.2023).

of indication, information and technical implementation. It is carried out under controlled conditions under general anaesthetic with a clear indication.⁹³

4.3. Psychotherapy

There are as yet no clinical psychologists working in the state healthcare system. Discussions on the integration of psychologists are underway, but are still ongoing.⁹⁴ For this reason, psychotherapy in the state health system continues to be carried out by psychiatrists.⁹⁵ A day clinic attached to the national psychiatric hospital in Angoda specialises in psychotherapy.⁹⁶

Private consultations with 19 clinical psychologists, 49 psychologists and 6 psychotherapists can be booked via eChannelling. The psychologists and psychotherapists who can be booked via eChannelling are mainly found in Colombo and the Western Province.⁹⁷ In regions where electronic booking platforms are not yet widespread, appointments with psychologists can also be booked directly with private clinics.

4.4. Psychiatry and addictions (alcohol, drugs, methadone programmes)

There are seven inpatient rehabilitation centres for alcohol treatment in Sri Lanka. These are located in Gampaha, Kandy, Jaffna, Batticaloa, Kurunegala, Badulla and Kilinochchi. The client-centred rehabilitation model offered at these centres requires voluntary admission, and those affected can be encouraged and motivated to enrol by social workers. In addition to counselling for drug addicts, these centres offer rehabilitation activities such as play therapy, group therapy, gardening, religious programmes and family interventions.⁹⁸

The NIMH in Angoda offers the possibility of inpatient alcohol withdrawal.⁹⁹

Addicts are also treated as outpatients. In the hospital in Chavakachcheri visited by the SEM country analysis, the outpatient centre for addicts is housed in a separate building.¹⁰⁰

Drug replacement therapy or *opioid substitution therapy* (OST), such as methadone therapy, is not available.¹⁰¹

4.5. Post-traumatic stress disorder; help for victims of torture

Patients with mostly civil war-related mental illnesses can receive psychiatric treatment for their symptoms in the public or private healthcare system. This is shown in the overview of available therapies (see Appendix 2).

A centre for patients with psychological trauma, including those related to the civil war, was also built in Mankulam in the Mullaitivu district. The centre is scheduled to open in 2023.¹⁰²

Several sources indicate that it can be difficult for both patients and the doctors treating them to speak publicly about these war-related psychological traumas. In medical reports, it can be awkward to mention "torture" or "war" as the cause of illness. One Tamil psychiatrist is aware of a case in which a colleague was interrogated by the police after he had made a written diagnosis with "torture" as the cause of the illness. Some traumatised victims of torture are afraid to leave their homes, e.g. for psychiatric treatment by a specialist in Colombo.¹⁰³

⁹³ Annette B. Brühl. Zurich. Electroconvulsive therapy. Indications and application. In: Psychiatry and Neurology. 03.2019. <https://www.rosenfluh.ch/psychiatrie-neurologie-2019-03/elektrokonvulsionstherapie-indikationen-und-anwendung> (30.03.2023).

⁹⁴ Interview with Dr Pushpa Ranasinghe, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist, Dr Ishan De Zoysa, National Institute for Mental Health (NIMH), Angoda, 15.02.2023.

⁹⁵ Findings of the SEM Sri Lanka country analysis mission (Colombo, Northern Province), 02.2023.

⁹⁶ Visit country analysis SEM, Navodaya Centre at the National Institute for Mental Health (NIMH), Angoda, 15.02.2023.

⁹⁷ Mobitel (PVT), Colombo. eChannelling. Homepage, [undated]. <https://www.echannelling.com/> (10.03.2023).

⁹⁸ World Health Organisation (WHO) Regional Office for South-East, New Delhi. Sri Lanka health system review, 2021. <https://apo.who.int/publications/i/item/sri-lanka-health-system-review> (15.03.2023).

⁹⁹ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 14658 (01.04.2021).

¹⁰⁰ See appendix 1.

¹⁰¹ Information from the Swiss Embassy, Colombo, 04.04.2023.

¹⁰² See chapter 2.5

¹⁰³ Interview with a senior consultant psychiatrist, Northern Province, 09/02/2023.

However, there are organisations that offer specific help for traumatised people and victims of torture. One such organisation is the *Family Rehabilitation Centre* (FRC), which offers *counselling* and psychosocial support for traumatised people and victims of torture, particularly in the north of Sri Lanka.¹⁰⁴ Patients who seek help from organisations such as the FRC can be observed by the security authorities. For this reason, many patients with civil war trauma prefer to be treated in private healthcare facilities.¹⁰⁵

4.6. Telemedicine

A psychotherapist in private practice in Colombo began offering online therapies during the Covid-19 pandemic. Although he considers direct contact with patients to be more ideal, he continues to offer this method.¹⁰⁶

Tellippalai Hospital operates a telephone helpline. Some of the therapists (*counsellors*) working there are available to patients on the helpline on a rotating basis. A tele-psychiatric service has also been set up in the Mannar district.¹⁰⁷ The Kudil Centre for Reintegration in Tellippalai is technically equipped for online counselling. Computers are available in two consultation rooms.¹⁰⁸

5. Pharmaceuticals

Common psychotropic¹⁰⁹ and other medications for the treatment of secondary illnesses are available in the ward rooms of the facilities visited.¹¹⁰ The wards can order additional medication from the central pharmacies of the respective facilities if required. The annex to this report contains an example list of the medication available on the ward of *Point Pedro Base Hospital* at the time of the SEM country analysis visit. The medication stock in the ward room of this hospital is an example of the stocks found in the other facilities. The tablets (daily rations) are kept in small bottles on the medication trolley, not in blister packs. Other, larger bottles with a weekly or monthly supply as well as medication for injection (e.g. depot neuroleptics) or medication requiring refrigeration are also kept on the ward in locked cupboards and/or refrigerators.¹¹¹

Some medicines that the SEM country analysis has seen in psychiatric wards in Sri Lanka are no longer on the market in Switzerland. According to the Ministry of Health, it is common practice in Sri Lanka not to use the very latest generation of medicines for cost reasons, but rather the often significantly cheaper medicines of the previous generation.¹¹²

5.1. Medicines authorised in Sri Lanka

The website of the *National Medicines Regulatory Authority* (NMRA) can be accessed via the following [link](#) to search for all medicines currently registered in the country and sort them by manufacturer, importer and production site.¹¹³

¹⁰⁴ Family Rehabilitation Centre (FRC), Colombo. About Family Rehabilitation Centre, [undated]. <https://mail.frsl.org/index.php/about-frc/about-frc>.

¹⁰⁵ Interview with a senior consultant psychiatrist, Northern Province, 09/02/2023.

¹⁰⁶ Interview with Dr Marcel de Roos, Colombo, 06.02.2023.

¹⁰⁷ Interview with Dr T. Umaharan, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist, Base Hospital, Tellippalai (Jaffna District), 10.03.2023.

¹⁰⁸ Tellippalai (Jaffna district). Visit country analysis SEM at Kudil Residential Rehabilitation Centre. Visit Kudil, 10.02.2023.

¹⁰⁹ Pharmawiki. Disentis/Mustér. Psychotropic: influencing the psyche. 14.06.2012. <https://www.pharmawiki.ch/wiki/index.php?wiki=psychotropv> (27.03.2023).

¹¹⁰ Interview with Dr T. Umaharan, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist, Base Hospital, Tellippalai (Jaffna District), 10.03.2023.

¹¹¹ Findings of the SEM Sri Lanka country analysis mission (Colombo, Northern Province), 02.2023

¹¹² Interview with Dr Asela Gunawardena, Director General of Health Services, Ministry of Health, Colombo, 06.02.2023.

¹¹³ National Medicines Regulatory Authority (NMRA), Colombo. Registered Medicines, [undated]. <https://www.nmra.gov.lk/> (31/03/2023).

All registered medicines can be imported. It is possible that certain medicines are not available in the public healthcare system, but can be procured privately. Non-registered medicines can neither be imported nor prescribed and obtained.¹¹⁴



Point Pedro Base Hospital: inpatient psychiatric ward, medication trolley in the ward room. © Country analysis SEM.

The list of essential medicines, last updated in 2014,¹¹⁵ *National list of-essential medicines Sri Lanka* is also available on the NMRA website.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴ Interview with Dr Vijith Gunasekera, CEO and Director General of the National Medicines Regulatory Authority NMRA, Colombo, 13.02.2023. / National Medicines Regulatory Authority NMRA, Colombo. Registered medicines. <https://www.nmra.gov.lk/> (24/03/2023).

¹¹⁵ According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), *essential medicines* are medicines that are needed to meet the most urgent health care needs of the population. They should be available to all people in adequate quantities, in the correct dosage form, in good quality and at a price that is affordable for the patient. Medicus Mundi Switzerland, Basel. 2021. www.medicusmundi.ch/de/advocacy/publikationen/med-in-switzerland/25-jahre-who-liste-der-unentbehrlichen-arzneimittel (27.03.2023).

¹¹⁶ National Medicines Regulatory Authority NMRA, Colombo. Publications. National list of essential medicines Sri Lanka 2013-2014. Fifth revision. <http://mediverify.lk/> (27.03.2023).

The medicines regulated by the NMRA are imported by various suppliers or manufactured locally. These are, for example, the *Medical Supplies Division (MSD)*¹¹⁷ of the *Ministry of Healthcare and Nutrition*, the *State Pharmaceuticals Corporation of Sri Lanka (SPC)*¹¹⁸ or numerous private companies such as the Swiss trading company *Baurs*, which is active in Sri Lanka.¹¹⁹

The NMRA is modelled on the Australian (TGA¹²⁰), US (FDA¹²¹) and British (MHRA¹²²) drug authorities when it comes to new approvals and the strategy for drug procurement by the authority.¹²³

5.2. Online pharmacies

The *State Pharmaceuticals Corporation of Sri Lanka* supplies both state-run healthcare facilities and the private sector (authorised pharmacies or other distributors) with medicines, medicinal products and laboratory supplies.¹²⁴ A list of medicines, including current prices and possible suppliers, is available on the website. The price list is updated regularly (last update on 22 May 2023).¹²⁵

Numerous private pharmacies, including the well-known pharmacies *Union Chemists*, *Asiri Surgical Hospital Pharmacy* and *Health Guard Pharmacy*, have several branches in Colombo. In addition to the branch network, all three also operate an online pharmacy through which patients can order medicines. To do so, they enter their contact details and the pick-up location and upload the prescription. The medication is either sent to their home or made available for collection at a pharmacy.¹²⁶

At *Union Chemists*, it is possible to enquire about the availability of a specific medicine via WhatsApp and upload the prescription there. The WhatsApp number can be clicked directly on the website. The availability of the medicine will be announced after the order request.¹²⁷

Union Chemists supplies medicines and medical supplies nationwide. This does not include injectable and cold chain drugs.¹²⁸

Most medicines are available from *Union Chemists*, except for some active ingredients that can only be imported and distributed by the state (cancer drugs, certain antibiotics). Depot antipsychotics are also not available from *Union Chemists*. These are only supplied to state

¹¹⁷ Medical Supplies Division (MSD), Ministry of Healthcare and Nutrition, Colombo. "The Medical Supplies Division (MSD) of Ministry of Healthcare and Nutrition is the main organisation responsible for providing all Pharmaceuticals, Surgical items, Laboratory Items, Radioactive Items, Printed materials, etc. for Government sector healthcare institutions throughout the country. In addition, MSD is also responsible for supplying dangerous drugs and essential medical items, which are not available to the private sector in the open market. <https://www.msd.gov.lk/> (27.03.2023).

¹¹⁸ State Pharmaceuticals Corporation of Sri Lanka (SPC), Colombo. For the past 40 years SPC has been the sole supplier of pharmaceuticals, surgical consumable items, chemicals and equipment to all institutions administered by the health ministry. <https://www.spc.lk/about-spc.php> (27.03.2023).

¹¹⁹ Baurs, Colombo. Healthcare, 2023. <https://baurs.com/healthcare/> (02/05/2023).

¹²⁰ Note Country analysis SEM: TGA = Therapeutic Goods Administration, Canberra. [undated]. <https://www.tga.gov.au/> (18/04/2023).

¹²¹ Note country analysis SEM: FDA = U.S. Food and Drug Administration, Silver Spring. [undated]. <https://www.fda.gov/> (18/04/2023).

¹²² Note on country analysis SEM: MHRA = Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency, London. [undated]. <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/medicines-and-healthcare-products-regulatory-agency> (18/04/2023).

¹²³ Interview with Dr Vijith Gunasekera, CEO and Director General of the National Medicines Regulatory Authority NMRA, Colombo, 13.02.2023.

¹²⁴ State Pharmaceuticals Corporation of Sri Lanka (SPC), Colombo. <https://www.spc.lk/about-spc.php> (27/03/2023).

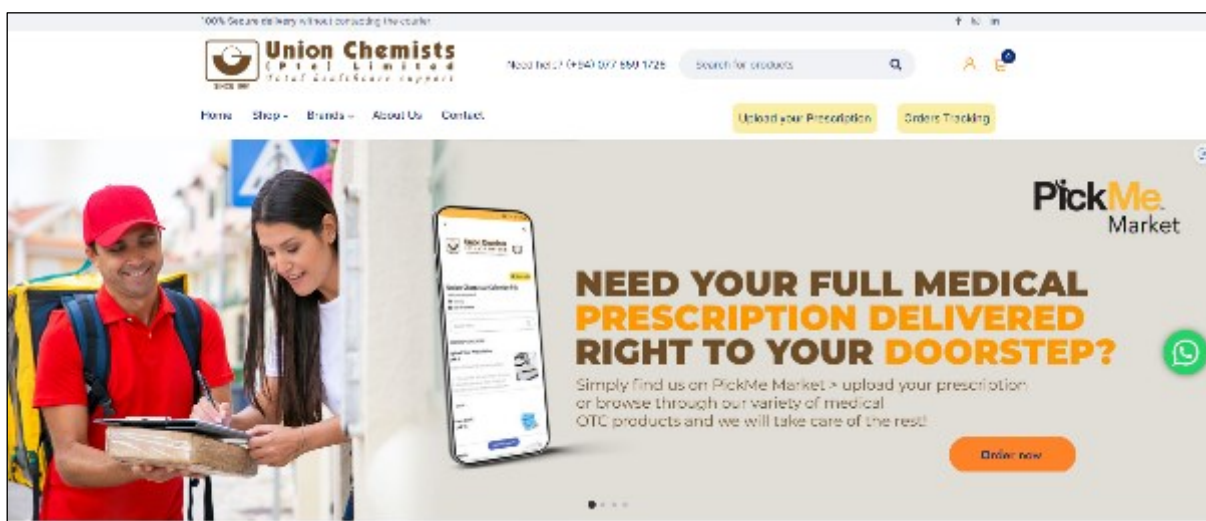
¹²⁵ State Pharmaceuticals Corporation of Sri Lanka (SPC), Colombo. Products. www.spc.lk/products.php (27/03/2023).

¹²⁶ Union Chemists Pharmacy, Colombo. Homepage. 2022. <https://www.unionchemistspharmacy.lk/> (24/03/2023). Asiri Health, a Softlogic Group Company. Colombo. Online Pharmacy Service. www.asirihealth.com/online-pharmacy-service (26/07/2022). / Healthguard Pharmacy Limited, Colombo. 2023. <https://www.healthguard.lk/> (24/03/2023).

¹²⁷ Information Swiss Embassy, Colombo, 02.2023. / Interview with Shalintha Rodrigo, Responsible Operations & Business Strategy, Union Chemists (Pte) Limited Pharmacy, Colombo, 14.02.2023.

¹²⁸ Interview with Shalintha Rodrigo, Responsible Operations & Business Strategy, Union Chemists (Pte) Limited Pharmacy, Colombo, 14 February 2023.

clinics and administered there by specialised staff. *Union Chemists* does not import the medicines itself,¹²⁹ but obtains them from importers such as *Sunshine Healthcare Lanka Ltd.*¹³⁰ or *Baurs.*¹³¹



Online pharmacy Union Chemists, Colombo. (Screenshot, 03.2023). © Union Chemists, Colombo. Authorisation for use received on 16.05.2023.

The appendix to this report contains a non-exhaustive list of a selection of common psychotropic drugs that were available at the time of the interview with *Union Chemists*. The availability of other medications can be determined by a current enquiry (e.g. with *Union Chemists* or MedCOI, see below).¹³²

5.3. MedCOI database

Information on the availability of psychotropic medication is listed in the annex to this report. This is based on a query in the MedCOI database of the European Asylum Agency EUAA¹³³ dated 24 March 2023. The availability of the medication was checked by the *EUAA MedCOI Sector*¹³⁴. The *MedCOI Sector* lists *Union Chemists Pharmacy*,¹³⁵ *Asiri Surgical Hospital Pharmacy*,¹³⁶ *Apeksha Hospital Pharmacy*, all in Colombo, and *Jaffna Teaching Hospital Pharmacy*¹³⁷ in Jaffna as possible pharmacies for procuring the medicines.¹³⁸

¹²⁹ Interview with Shalintha Rodrigo, Responsible Operations & Business Strategy, Union Chemists (Pte) Limited Pharmacy, Colombo, 14 February 2023.

¹³⁰ Sunshine Holdings, Colombo. Pharmaceuticals. 2023. <https://www.sunshineholdings.lk/our-businesses/healthcare/pharmaceuticals> (24/03/2023).

¹³¹ Baurs, Colombo. Healthcare, 2023. <https://baurs.com/healthcare/> (02/05/2023).

¹³² Interview with Shalintha Rodrigo, Responsible Operations & Business Strategy, Union Chemists (Pte) Limited Pharmacy, Colombo, 14 February 2023.

¹³³ Note Country analysis SEM: Medical country of origin information (MedCOI).

¹³⁴ The European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) provides access to medical country of origin information (MedCOI). EUAA, Valletta. 2022. <https://euaa.europa.eu/country-origin-information> (24/03/2023).

¹³⁵ Union Chemists limited, Colombo. Homepage. 2022. www.unionchemistspharmacy.lk/ (24/03/2023).

¹³⁶ Asiri Surgical Hospital Pharmacy, Colombo. Pharmacy. 2022. <https://www.asirihealth.com/services-and-centres/healthy-body/pharmacy> (24/03/2023).

¹³⁷ Teaching Hospital Jaffna, Jaffna. Homepage. 2022. <https://thjaffna.lk/> (24/03/2023).

¹³⁸ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 15904 (07/07/2022). / International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 15896 (01.07.2022). / International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 15876 (24/06/2022). / International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 15693 (19/04/2022).

6. Economic crisis from 2022

Since the beginning of 2022, Sri Lanka has been experiencing its worst economic crisis since independence in 1948.¹³⁹ As foreign currency income from the important tourism sector collapsed during the pandemic, among other things, the country was no longer able to service its foreign debt. In May 2022, Sri Lanka was officially declared insolvent. The central bank predicted that inflation could rise to up to 70 per cent in the coming months.¹⁴⁰ In February 2023, inflation was 50.5 per cent.¹⁴¹ On 21 March 2023, after lengthy negotiations, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) granted a loan of 2.9 billion dollars over four years. According to the IMF, this is intended to restore macroeconomic stability.¹⁴²

Due to a shortage of foreign currency, there were supply shortages in Sri Lanka, which mainly affected imported goods. There was a shortage of fuel and gas for cooking, fertilisers for agriculture, certain foodstuffs, medicines and medical consumables. These goods could no longer be imported in sufficient quantities. High inflation also led to a loss of purchasing power.¹⁴³ In June 2022, the UN expressed concern that this situation could develop into a major humanitarian emergency.¹⁴⁴

However, various measures taken since summer 2022 have led to a stabilisation of the supply situation and access to healthcare in Sri Lanka:

- Thanks to rationing and the introduction of allocation quotas for fuel, there are no more queues at petrol stations. Private individuals can plan their fuel consumption. Public transport runs normally again and without restrictions. Ambulance services and other relevant public services receive unrestricted fuel and operate normally again. Patients and healthcare staff can reach healthcare facilities without restrictions.¹⁴⁵
- Hospitals are exempt from the power cuts.¹⁴⁶ During its visit to Jaffna in February 2023, which lasted several days, the SEM country analysis was able to observe that the university hospital continued to be supplied with electricity in the evening during the planned power cuts in the city of Jaffna, which lasted around two hours.¹⁴⁷
- International emergency loans (mainly from India) totalling several hundred million USD were used to purchase urgently needed medicines.¹⁴⁸
- Sri Lanka received several international donations of medicines and medical supplies.¹⁴⁹

¹³⁹ Al Jazeera, Qatar. Timeline of Sri Lanka's worst economic crisis since independence. 13.04.2022.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/4/13/timeline-of-sri-lankas-worst-economic-crisis-since-independence> (15.07.2022).

¹⁴⁰ NZZ, Zurich. Sri Lanka declares a state of emergency. 14.07.2022. S. 1.

¹⁴¹ Central Bank of Sri Lanka, Colombo. CCPI based headline inflation eased in February 2023, 28.02.2023.

https://www.cbsl.gov.lk/sites/default/files/cbslweb_documents/press/pr/press_20230228_inflation_in_february_2023_ccpi_e.pdf (28.03.2023).

¹⁴² Reuters, London. Debt-stricken Sri Lanka to get first tranche of IMF bailout funds in two days, 21.03.2023.

<https://www.reuters.com/markets/asia/sri-lanka-receive-first-tranche-imf-next-two-days-2023-03-21/> (23.03.2023).

¹⁴³ The Hindu, Chennai. Janatha Aragalaya. The movement that booted out the Rajapaksas. 17.07.2022. (Paid article) <https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/janatha-aragalaya-the-movement-that-booted-out-the-rajapaksas/article65645573.ece> (26.07.2022).

¹⁴⁴ Reuters, London. Sri Lanka risks full-blown humanitarian emergency, UN agency says. 10.06.2022.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/sri-lanka-risks-full-blown-humanitarian-emergency-un-agency-says-2022-06-10/> (27.07.2022).

¹⁴⁵ Newswire, Colombo. National Fuel Pass QR system: Notice for All Vehicle users, 30.07.2022.

<https://www.newswire.lk/2022/07/30/national-fuel-pass-qr-system-notice-for-all-vehicle-users/> (17.03.2023). /

Findings of the SEM Sri Lanka country analysis mission (Colombo, Northern Province), 02.2023.

¹⁴⁶ Interview with T. Sathyamoorthy, Director Jaffna Teaching Hospital, Jaffna, 08.02.2023.

¹⁴⁷ Findings of the SEM Sri Lanka country analysis mission (Colombo, Northern Province), 02.2023.

¹⁴⁸ Economy Next, Colombo. Sri Lanka hopes to ease medicine shortages as more supplies come in, 06.02.2023.

<https://economynext.com/sri-lanka-hopes-to-ease-medicine-shortages-as-more-supplies-come-in-111433/> (17.03.2023).

¹⁴⁹ U.S. Embassy in Sri Lanka, Colombo. U.S. Donates Medical Equipment to Sri Lanka-wide Hospitals,

17.10.2023. <https://lk.usembassy.gov/u-s-donates-medical-equipment-to-sri-lanka-wide-hospitals/>

(28.03.2023). / World Health Organisation (WHO), Geneva. WHO delivers essential medicines and supplies to

- Hospitals and the Ministry of Health received private donations. In particular, healthcare facilities with strong networks of Sri Lankan specialists abroad were able to benefit from such donations.¹⁵⁰
- A list of stocks of essential medicines compiled by the WHO together with the Ministry of Health on a quarterly basis provides an overview and helps to anticipate shortages and act in good time.¹⁵¹
- The import of authorised medicinal products by private companies is once again possible without restriction. Almost all medicines are available in private pharmacies.¹⁵² In mid-February 2023, for example, blood glucose test strips were not available in state hospital pharmacies, but they could be purchased in private pharmacies (*Union Chemists Pharmacy*).¹⁵³
- Medicines in short supply are rationed where medically justifiable. Medical emergencies are not affected by rationing.¹⁵⁴

Representatives of the healthcare sector in Sri Lanka point out that even highly developed healthcare systems in Western countries are currently affected by shortages of medicines and skilled labour due to disruptions in supply chains and that medical services in these countries, as in Sri Lanka, have had to be rationed. The British healthcare system was mentioned in particular in this context.¹⁵⁵

A director general at the Ministry of Health told the country analysis SEM that there have been no deaths so far due to the healthcare crisis. The Ministry of Health has commissioned a comprehensive study on the impact of the economic crisis on patient health.¹⁵⁶ In May 2022, Dr Vasan Ratnasingam, spokesperson for the GMOA doctors' union, had warned that the shortage of medicines in Sri Lanka was life-threatening for some people waiting for medical treatment.¹⁵⁷ When asked whether, nine months after the warning, the fears that patients could die due to a lack of care had been realised, Dr Ratnasingam replied to the SEM country analysis in February 2023 that he was not aware of any specific deaths. Two cases of deceased patients are currently being investigated. The Ministry of Health was trying to find out whether their deaths were related to the lack of medication in 2022. The outcome of the investigation is not yet known, but from the GMOA's point of view, it will probably not be possible to clearly attribute the two deaths to the lack of medication. There were many other factors that also contributed to the deterioration in health in these two cases.¹⁵⁸

The Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Colombo told the country analysis SEM that Sri Lanka's healthcare system has proven to be surprisingly robust and efficient in the crises of recent years (Covid-19 pandemic, economic crisis).¹⁵⁹

help sustain vital health services for crisis response and beyond, 24.01.2023.

<https://www.who.int/srilanka/news/detail/24-01-2023-who-delivers-essential-medicines-and-supplies-to-help-sustain-vital-health-services-for-crisis-response-and-beyond> (28.03.2023).

¹⁵⁰ Interview with T. Sathyamoorthy, Director Jaffna Teaching Hospital, Jaffna, 08.02.2023.

¹⁵¹ World Health Organisation (WHO), Colombo. List of Out of stock Essential Pharmaceuticals, 19.12.2022.

¹⁵² Interview with Shalintha Rodrigo, Responsible Operations & Business Strategy, Union Chemists (Pte) Limited Pharmacy, Colombo, 14 February 2023.

¹⁵³ Findings of the SEM Sri Lanka country analysis mission (Colombo, Northern Province), 02.2023

¹⁵⁴ Interview with Prof Vidya Jyothi Vajira H.W. Dissanayake, Dean, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo, 14.02.2023.

¹⁵⁵ Interview with Dr Asela Gunawardena, Director General of Health Services, Ministry of Health, Colombo, 06.02.2023. / Interview with Prof. Vidya Jyothi Vajira H.W. Dissanayake, Dean, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo, 14.02.2023.

¹⁵⁶ Interview with Dr Asela Gunawardena, Director General of Health Services, Ministry of Health, Colombo, 06.02.2023.

¹⁵⁷ Swissinfo, Bern. Sri Lankan medicine shortage a death sentence for some, doctors say. Dr Ratnasingam Reuters, 23.05.2022. <https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/sri-lankan-medicine-shortage-a-death-sentence-for-some--doctors-say/47615182> (27.03.2023).

¹⁵⁸ Interview with Dr Vasan Ratnasingam, Press Officer, Government Medical Officers Association (GMOA), Colombo, 13.02.2023.

¹⁵⁹ Interview with Prof Vidya Jyothi Vajira H.W. Dissanayake, Dean, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo, 14.02.2023.

At Jaffna University Hospital in the Northern Province, 95% of the required medicines and consumables were available in February 2023, according to Dr Sathyamoorthy, the hospital director. During the economic crisis in 2022 and 2023, the hospital was able to bridge certain shortages in the supply of medicines with donations from abroad.¹⁶⁰

The private healthcare sector has hardly been affected by the economic crisis. Since autumn 2022, there have been hardly any shortages of medicines in private hospitals, as private importers can import all approved medicines and this is also supported by the government. In one large private hospital, all medical treatments and operations could be carried out without restrictions in February 2023.¹⁶¹ According to the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Colombo, who himself works as a private doctor in various private hospitals, all medicines and medical treatments are once again available in the private healthcare sector.¹⁶²

7. Access to mental health care

7.1. Universal Health Coverage (UHC)

The latest available WHO figures from 2019 show that the *Universal Health Coverage* (UHC) Index in Sri Lanka is 66%.¹⁶³ This means that 66% of people in Sri Lanka have access to the full range of quality health services when and where they need them without financial hardship. Globally, this index was 67% in 2019.¹⁶⁴

7.2. Direct healthcare expenditure by patients

The costs paid directly by patients in Sri Lanka in the mixed public-private healthcare system (*out-of-pocket expenditure*) amounted to 50.7 % of total healthcare expenditure in 2019, i.e. before the pandemic and the economic crisis. In addition, 2.4 % of costs were covered by health insurance. The reason for this is that more than half of all outpatient medical treatment in Sri Lanka is provided by the private sector.¹⁶⁵ More recent official figures on the share of self-payers in healthcare expenditure in Sri Lanka are not available. It can be assumed that these have risen overall due to general price increases, particularly for medicines. The price increase was stated in various Sri Lankan media as 40% in 2022. The prices of individual medicines have doubled.¹⁶⁶

Over the last ten years, direct healthcare expenditure by patients has ranged between 47 % and 52 % and is comparable with other countries in South Asia. In India, for example, it is 51 %, in Pakistan 54 %.¹⁶⁷

According to the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Colombo, Sri Lanka's private healthcare services are considered very reasonably priced by international standards.¹⁶⁸

7.3. Private health insurance

Private sector employees in particular are covered by health insurance in Sri Lanka. The insurance is taken out and paid for by the employer for the employee's entire family. It is also

¹⁶⁰ Interview with T. Sathyamoorthy, Director Jaffna Teaching Hospital, Jaffna, 08.02.2023.

¹⁶¹ Visit country analysis SEM, Kings Hospital, Colombo, 14 February 2023. <https://www.kingshospital.lk/> (24 March 2023).

¹⁶² Interview with Prof Vidya Jyothi Vajira H.W. Dissanayake, Dean, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo, 14.02.2023.

¹⁶³ World Health Organisation (WHO), Colombo. 36th UN Health Cluster Virtual Meeting (minutes), 28 February 2023.

¹⁶⁴ World Health Organisation (WHO), Geneva. Universal health coverage (UHC), 12.12.2022. [https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/universal-health-coverage-\(uhc\)](https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/universal-health-coverage-(uhc)) (28.03.2023).

¹⁶⁵ World Health Organisation (WHO) Regional Office for South-East, New Delhi. Sri Lanka health system review, 2021. <https://apo.who.int/publications/i/item/sri-lanka-health-system-review> (15.03.2023).

¹⁶⁶ Interview with Shalintha Rodrigo, Responsible Operations & Business Strategy, Union Chemists (Pte) Limited Pharmacy, Colombo, 14 February 2023.

¹⁶⁷ Colombo. World Bank Information Session on Health Sector; Economic Crisis and Impact on Health Sector in Sri Lanka, 17.01.2023.

¹⁶⁸ Interview with Prof Vidya Jyothi Vajira H.W. Dissanayake, Dean, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo, 14.02.2023.

possible to take out private health insurance. Sri Lankan insurance policies usually contain a maximum annual sum insured. Certain illnesses are often excluded from coverage. The amount of the premium depends on the policyholder's age and state of health.¹⁶⁹ According to the WHO, 3.6 % of healthcare costs in Sri Lanka are covered by employer insurance and 0.9 % by private health insurance.¹⁷⁰

7.4. Returnees

Anyone staying in Sri Lanka, including foreigners, can make use of state healthcare free of charge at their place of residence. If you are ill, you can go to the nearest hospital; if you need to see a specialist, e.g. a psychiatrist, you can go directly to the outpatient clinic of a state hospital where the desired medical speciality is offered. No registration at the place of residence is required for treatment in the public health system.¹⁷¹ De facto, there is free choice of doctor in Sri Lanka. Tamil-speaking patients from the Eastern Province, for example, often go to the psychiatric university hospital in Tellippalai (Jaffna, Northern Province), as it is regarded by the population as competent and adapted to the Tamil culture.¹⁷²

Services in private hospitals and clinics can be utilised directly by all persons without restrictions. It is customary to pay for the consultation or medical treatment directly.¹⁷³ Foreign health insurance holders pay for medical consultations and treatment directly at the clinic and then settle the bill with the insurance company.¹⁷⁴ Medical appointments booked online can be billed directly in the booking app (e.g. on eChannelling).¹⁷⁵

7.5. Treatment options at your own place of residence (primary contact points)

There are psychiatric outpatient *clinics* (mental *health clinics*) at almost every clinic at community level (*divisional hospital*). This is shown in a list and map from the *National Council for Mental Health*. There are also acute psychiatric wards and inpatient psychiatric departments in every district of Sri Lanka.¹⁷⁶ *Consultant* psychiatrists mainly work at tertiary institutions such as university hospitals and *base hospitals*. These are often located in the main towns of the provinces and districts.¹⁷⁷

7.6. Treatment options in your own native language

All senior psychiatrists (*consultants*) and qualified psychiatrists (*registrars*) working in the Northern Province are Tamil-speaking. The general practitioners (*Medical Officers*) are transferred to the various provinces by the Ministry of Health. Therefore, Sinhala-speaking *Medical Officers* also work in the hospitals in the North. A doctor of Sinhala mother tongue working in a psychiatry department in the Northern Province told the SEM country analysis that he could communicate about simple medical issues in Tamil. The therapists (*counsellors*) met by the SEM country analysis in the various hospitals and organisations were all Tamil-speaking.¹⁷⁸ At the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) in Angoda, one of nine psychiatric consultants is a native Tamil speaker. The NIMH also employs translators who are

¹⁶⁹ Information from the Swiss Embassy, Colombo, 02.2023.

¹⁷⁰ World Health Organisation (WHO) Regional Office for South-East, New Delhi. Sri Lanka health system review, 2021. <https://apo.who.int/publications/i/item/sri-lanka-health-system-review> (15.03.2023).

¹⁷¹ Interview with Dr Asela Gunawardena, Director General of Health Services, Ministry of Health, Colombo, 06.02.2023.

¹⁷² Interview with Prof. Sambasivamoorthy Sivayokan, Professor of Psychiatry, University of Jaffna, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist, Jaffna University Hospital / Tellippalai, Jaffna, 10.02.2023.

¹⁷³ Visit country analysis SEM, Kings Hospital, Colombo, 14 February 2023. <https://www.kingshospital.lk/> (24 March 2023).

¹⁷⁴ Findings of the SEM Sri Lanka country analysis mission (Colombo, Northern Province), 02.2023.

¹⁷⁵ Mobitel (PVT); eChannelling, Colombo. Channel Dr Ganeshan, 27.03.2023. <https://www.echannelling.com/search-results?doctor=channel-ganeshan> (27.03.2023).

¹⁷⁶ National Council for Mental Health, Sahanaya Resource Information Centre (SRIC). Government Hospitals with psychiatric wards, [undated]. <http://www.sric.lk/page/government-hospitals-with-psychiatric-wards/13> (23/03/2023).

¹⁷⁷ Findings of the SEM Sri Lanka country analysis mission (Colombo, Northern Province), 02.2023

¹⁷⁸ Findings of the SEM Sri Lanka country analysis mission (Colombo, Northern Province), 02.2023

used in communication between patients and medical staff.¹⁷⁹ Medical studies in Sri Lanka are conducted exclusively in English. For this reason, all Sri Lankan doctors speak excellent English.¹⁸⁰ Tamil-speaking psychiatrists in the private sector are available in the Northern Province and in the Western Province (Colombo).¹⁸¹

7.7. Cultural aspects

A Tamil senior consultant psychiatrist points out that cultural aspects play an important role in dealing with mental illness. For example, the "Judeo-Christian" concept of "guilt" hardly plays a role in Sri Lanka's Tamil-Hindu society. Rather, "anger" and "paranoia" are important themes in connection with mental illness. Patients hardly ever feel "guilty" or responsible for anything negative. This is one of the reasons why there is no term for "depression" in Tamil. For many Tamil patients and their families, it is difficult to recognise a mental illness such as depression and to seek medical help.¹⁸² Prof. Daya Somasundaram from Jaffna points out, for example, that cognitive behavioural therapy, which is widely used in Western countries to heal psychological trauma, cannot necessarily be applied in the same way in non-Western societies. People from such societies may find modern psychotherapy alien and unacceptable. Doctors and therapists need to find a culturally appropriate way to enable patients to express their thoughts and experiences. In particular, traditional approaches such as yoga should be included in the therapy of trauma patients.¹⁸³

Stigmatisation of mental illness

The stigmatisation of mental illness was addressed by almost all interviewees in the SEM country analysis in Sri Lanka.¹⁸⁴ It influences the way in which mental illness is talked about and how mentally ill people are thought of, right down to the lower standing of the profession of psychiatrist compared to other groups of doctors. As in Switzerland, certain place names (Tellippalai/Angoda) have become synonymous with "psychiatric hospital" in the population. People therefore want to avoid travelling to "Tellippalai" or "Angoda".

The relatively strong stigmatisation has an impact on patients' behaviour. Some feel uncomfortable when they are seen in a psychiatric clinic. However, the system of outpatient *clinics* means that if you want to make an appointment, you have to sit in front of a psychiatric ward for a relatively long time in a "publicly" visible position. Others try to be treated by general practitioners to avoid having to see a psychiatrist.

Due to stigmatisation, facilities and programmes for the mentally ill often have euphonious but rather meaningless names. For example, the clinic for alcohol and drug patients in Chavakachcheri is called the "*Healing Centre*", the "*Mankulam Psychological Trauma Centre*" project will now officially be called the "*Mankulam Centre for Welfare and Recovery*" when it opens, and the rehabilitation centre for chronically mentally ill people in Tellippalai is called *Kudil* (hut).

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¹⁷⁹ Interview with Dr Pushpa Ranasinghe, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist, Dr Ishan De Zoysa, National Institute for Mental Health (NIMH), Angoda, 15.02.2023.

¹⁸⁰ Interview with Prof. Sambasivamoorthy Sivayokan, Professor of Psychiatry, University of Jaffna, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist, Jaffna University Hospital / Tellippalai, Jaffna, 10.02.2023.

¹⁸¹ Mobitel (PVT); eChannelling, Colombo. Channel Dr Ganeshan, 27.03.2023.
<https://www.echannelling.com/search-results?doctor=channel-ganeshan> (27.03.2023).

¹⁸² Interview with Dr Mahesan Ganesan, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist, Jaffna, 08.02.2023.

¹⁸³ The Association of Commonwealth Universities, London. Prof Daya Somasundaram. All over the world, conflict, crisis, upheaval and loss can leave entire communities suffering from collective trauma, 08.07.2020.
<https://www.acu.ac.uk/the-acu-review/the-long-shadow/> (21.03.2023).

¹⁸⁴ Findings of the SEM Sri Lanka country analysis mission (Colombo, Northern Province), 02.2023

Appendix / Documentation

1. Psychiatric care Northern Province and Eastern Province

Abbreviation	Term English	Transcription German
TH	Teaching Hospital	Universitätsspital
PGH	Provincial General Hospital	Provinzspital
DGH	District General Hospital	Bezirksspital
BH	Base Hospital	Allgemeinspital
DH	Divisional Hospital	Gemeindespital
PMCU	Primary Medical Care Unit	Erstversorgungseinheit

Jaffna district	
<i>The Jaffna district had a population of just under 600,000 in 2012, which is more than half of the total population of the Northern Province.¹⁸⁵ The following psychiatric facilities are available in the Jaffna district in 2023:¹⁸⁶</i>	
<i>Acute Psychiatry Unit</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BH Tellippalai (part of the Jaffna Teaching Hospital)
<i>Medium Stay Unit</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BH Point Pedro • BH Chavakachcheri
<i>Residential Rehabilitation Centre</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kudil Centre in Tellippalai
<i>Psychiatric outpatient clinics (Clinics)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TH Jaffna • BH Tellippalai • BH Point Pedro • BH Chavakachcheri • BH Kayts • DH Maruthankerny • DH Velanay • PMCU Mulliyan
<i>Psychiatric specialists</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Professor / Consultant Psychiatry • 2 Head Physicians Psychiatry (Consultants) • 6 psychiatrists (MD) • 6 Medical Officer Mental Health

¹⁸⁵ Department of Census & Statistics Sri Lanka, Colombo. Census of Population and Housing - 2012, 2012. <http://www.statistics.gov.lk/PopHouSat/CPH2012Visualization/htdocs/index.php?usecase=indicator&action=M&ap&indId=10> (17/03/2023).

¹⁸⁶ Office of the Regional Director of Health Services, Jaffna. Statistical Handbook 2021, 2021 / National Council for Mental Health, Sahanaya Resource Information Centre (SRIC). Government Hospitals with psychiatric wards, [undated]. <http://www.sric.lk/page/government-hospitals-with-psychiatric-wards/13> (23/03/2023).

<i>Jaffna TH</i>	<p>Jaffna University Hospital (Jaffna Teaching Hospital) is the leading hospital in the Northern Province. It has 1300 beds and departments for all medical specialities.¹⁸⁷</p> <p>The psychiatry department is set up for outpatients. The university hospital's inpatient psychiatric department is located in the Tellippalai Base Hospital, 15 kilometres away.¹⁸⁸</p> <p>The psychiatry department in Jaffna consists of an outpatient centre for adults and an outpatient centre for underage psychiatric patients. Both outpatient clinics have treatment rooms, ward rooms, waiting areas and offices. The paediatric psychiatry department is equipped with toys and therapy material for children and adolescents.¹⁸⁹</p> <p>Consultation hours for psychiatric patients take place from Monday to Friday between 8 am and 1 pm. During consultation hours, a consultant psychiatrist, other doctors and psychiatric nursing staff as well as therapists (counsellors) are present.¹⁹⁰ Each therapist looks after between five and eight patients per day. Therapies with children tend to take longer, which is why the therapists in the paediatric psychiatry department can only see two to three people per day.¹⁹¹</p>
<i>Tellippalai BH</i>	<p>Tellippalai Base Hospital is a hospital specialising in psychiatry and oncology. The acute psychiatric ward is attached to the Jaffna University Hospital, which itself does not have a department for inpatients. The hospital in Tellippalai is also home to the teaching centre for courses in psychiatry at the Jaffna Faculty of Medicine.</p> <p>The inpatient psychiatry department has 32 beds. The outpatient centre is open from Monday to Saturday mornings.¹⁹²</p> <p>➔ More information on the Tellippalai BH in chapter 2.1.</p>
<i>Point Pedro BH</i>	<p>The Base Hospital in Point Pedro in the Jaffna district has a psychiatric outpatient centre as well as a department for inpatient psychiatric patients. The psychiatry department is managed by a consultant psychiatrist from Jaffna, who is present on a daily basis, and two general practitioners (medical officers) who practise permanently in Point Pedro. The psychiatry department of Jaffna University Hospital in Tellippalai Hospital is the reference hospital for Point Pedro.¹⁹³</p> <p>The outpatient centre is open three days a week from eight o'clock to 12:30. On average, 40 - 50 patients visit the outpatient centre every day. In total, around 550 outpatients are cared for by the hospital in Point Pedro. According to the doctor on duty, all psychotropic drugs were available in the hospital pharmacy during the week of the SEM country analysis visit.¹⁹⁴ The outpatient centre has a large waiting room with benches, treatment rooms and offices. During the SEM country analysis' visit, an estimated 20 psychiatric patients were waiting for an appointment.¹⁹⁵ The hospital in Point Pedro also runs a psychiatric outpatient clinic (mobile clinic) in the surrounding villages on certain days of the week.¹⁹⁶</p> <p>The inpatient psychiatry department at Point Pedro Hospital is located on the ground floor of a newer wing of the building. The department consists of seven patient rooms with a total of around 14 beds, a large ward room with a pharmacy, a centre for occupational therapy as well as dining and recreation rooms and offices. The rooms are as good as new and clean. They also have a shower and WC. Doctors' rounds of the inpatient ward take place before eight o'clock in the morning and in the afternoon, after the outpatient centre has closed.¹⁹⁷</p>

¹⁸⁷ Interview with T. Sathyamoorthy, Director Jaffna Teaching Hospital, Jaffna, 08.02.2023.

¹⁸⁸ Interview with T. Sathyamoorthy, Director Jaffna Teaching Hospital, Jaffna, 08.02.2023.

¹⁸⁹ Jaffna Teaching Hospital, Jaffna. Visit to psychiatry department, 08.02.2023.

¹⁹⁰ Jaffna Teaching Hospital, Jaffna. Visit to psychiatry department, 08.02.2023.

¹⁹¹ Interview with Counsellors, Jaffna Teaching Hospital, 08.02.2023.

¹⁹² Interview with Dr T. Umaharan, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist, Base Hospital, Tellippalai (Jaffna District), 10.03.2023.

¹⁹³ Interview with Dr Dayalini, Medical Superintendent and Dr Dulanjaya Atapattu, Medical Officer, Base Hospital, Point Pedro, 09.02.2023.

¹⁹⁴ Interview with Dr Dayalini, Medical Superintendent and Dr Dulanjaya Atapattu, Medical Officer, Base Hospital, Point Pedro, 09.02.2023.

¹⁹⁵ Country analysis mission SEM, Base Hospital Point Pedro (Jaffna district), 09.02.2023.

¹⁹⁶ Interview with Dr Dayalini, Medical Superintendent and Dr Dulanjaya Atapattu, Medical Officer, Base Hospital, Point Pedro, 09.02.2023.

¹⁹⁷ Country analysis mission SEM, Base Hospital Point Pedro (Jaffna district), 09.02.2023.

<i>Chavakachcheri BH</i>	In addition to medical departments and clinics, the Base Hospital in Chavakachcheri also has a psychiatric outpatient centre and a clinic for addicts. The psychiatric outpatient centre is open on Mondays and Wednesdays, while the addiction clinic is open on Tuesdays and Saturdays. ¹⁹⁸ → More information on the Chavakachcheri BH in chapter 2.2.
<i>Kudil -Centre for Rehabilitation and Reintegration</i>	There is a medium-stay psychiatric rehabilitation centre in the Jaffna district, the Kudil Residential Rehabilitation Centre near Tellippalai. → More information on the Kudil Centre in chapter 2.4.

Kilinochchi district	
<i>Kilinochchi district had a population of 113,510 in 2012.¹⁹⁹ The following psychiatric facilities are available in Kilinochchi district in 2023.²⁰⁰</i>	
<i>Acute Psychiatry Unit</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DGH Kilinochchi with ten beds
<i>Medium Stay Unit</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DH Tharmapuram, inpatient department for addicted patients (withdrawal)
<i>Psychiatric outpatient clinics (Clinics)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DGH Kilinochchi BH Mulankavil DH Veravil DH Poonakary DH Pallai DH Tharmapuram DH Vaddakkachchi DH Uruthirapuram DH Akkarayan Kulam
<i>Psychiatric specialists</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 psychiatrist (Senior Registrar) 4 Medical Officers Mental Health 4 Psychiatric nurses 2 psychiatric social workers
<i>DH Kilinochchi</i>	The outpatient centre at Kilinochchi Hospital is run by a qualified psychiatrist. It is open two days a week. Two doctors attend to around 200 patients per day in the outpatient centre.
<i>Other hospitals</i>	The team at Kilinochchi Hospital also runs the outpatient clinics in the small local clinics (divisional hospitals).
<i>Remarks</i>	<p>According to the qualified psychiatrist in Kilinochchi district, there are around 5,000 registered patients with serious mental illnesses who require drug treatment. Approximately the same number of patients have mild mental illnesses and receive non-medical psychotherapeutic treatment. The reference hospitals for the Kilinochchi district are the psychiatry department of Jaffna University Hospital in Tellippalai and the national psychiatric hospital in Angoda near Colombo.</p> <p>The following mental illnesses are common in the Kilinochchi district: Depression with suicidal thoughts, sleep problems; behavioural disorders; self-harm; domestic violence; alcohol addiction and drug abuse. Psychosocial problems and PTSD related to the war are also common.²⁰¹</p>

¹⁹⁸ Country analysis mission SEM, Base Hospital Chavakachcheri (Jaffna district), 08.02.2023.

¹⁹⁹ Department of Census & Statistics Sri Lanka, Colombo. Census of Population and Housing - 2012, 2012. <http://www.statistics.gov.lk/PopHouSat/CPH2012Visualization/htdocs/index.php?usecase=indicator&action=M&ap&indId=10> (17/03/2023).

²⁰⁰ National Council for Mental Health, Sahanaya Resource Information Centre (SRIC). Government Hospitals with psychiatric wards, [undated]. <http://www.sric.lk/page/government-hospitals-with-psychiatric-wards/13> (23/03/2023).

²⁰¹ Interview with Dr Jeyaraja, qualified specialist in psychiatry, Kilinochchi, 09.02.2023.

Vavuniya district	
<i>The population of Vavuniya district was 172 115 in 2012.²⁰² The following psychiatric facilities are available in Vavuniya district in 2023:²⁰³</i>	
<i>Acute Psychiatry Unit</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DGH Vavuniya
<i>Medium Stay Unit</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BH Cheddikulam
<i>Psychiatric outpatient clinics (Clinics)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DGH Vavuniya • DH Nedunkerny • DH Puliyanikulam • MOH Office Vavuniya South • Home for people with disabilities (Vanni Rehabilitation Organisation for Differently Abled)
<i>Psychiatric specialists</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 psychiatrists (Senior Registrar) • 3 Medical Officers Mental Health • 2 counsellors • 6 psychiatric social workers
<i>DGH Vavuniya</i>	The acute psychiatric ward of the District General Hospital Vavuniya has 12 beds. The psychiatric ward is headed by a qualified psychiatrist (senior registrar) who has over 20 years of professional experience in psychiatry. Treatments are carried out by the two therapists on instruction of the psychiatrists. The outpatient centre is open on Wednesdays. On average, two doctors receive a total of 180 patients in the outpatient centre between 8 am and 1 pm. Each psychiatric patient comes to the outpatient centre in Vavuniya or one of the smaller hospitals in the district on average once a month. Around a third of visitors to the outpatient centre are relatives of patients who have prescriptions written for their sick relatives for the monthly medication ration. ²⁰⁴
<i>Other hospitals</i>	The DGH Vavuniya team hold psychiatric consultations (clinics) in two smaller hospitals and in a home for people with mental disabilities on certain days. ²⁰⁵
<i>Remarks</i>	In 2022, there were occasional shortages of psychotropic drugs at Vavuniya Hospital. In February 2023, all medication was available, but stocks in the hospital pharmacy were "low" according to a psychiatrist working there. If there is a shortage of medication, the psychiatrists prescribe alternative drugs with a similar effect or ask patients to obtain the medication they need from private pharmacies at their own expense. ²⁰⁶

Mullaitivu district	
<i>Mullaitivu district had a population of 92 238 in 2012.²⁰⁷ The following psychiatric facilities are available in the district of Mullaitivu in 2023:²⁰⁸</i>	
<i>Acute Psychiatry Unit</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • none
<i>Medium Stay Unit</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • none

²⁰² Department of Census & Statistics Sri Lanka, Colombo. Census of Population and Housing - 2012, 2012. <http://www.statistics.gov.lk/PopHouSat/CPH2012Visualization/htdocs/index.php?usecase=indicator&action=M&ap&indld=10> (17/03/2023).

²⁰³ National Council for Mental Health, Sahanaya Resource Information Centre (SRIC). Government Hospitals with psychiatric wards, [undated]. <http://www.sric.lk/page/government-hospitals-with-psychiatric-wards/13> (23/03/2023).

²⁰⁴ Interview with a psychiatrist working in Vavuniya, Vavuniya, 07/02/2023.

²⁰⁵ Interview with a psychiatrist working in Vavuniya, Vavuniya, 07/02/2023.

²⁰⁶ Interview with a psychiatrist working in Vavuniya, Vavuniya, 07/02/2023.

²⁰⁷ Department of Census & Statistics Sri Lanka, Colombo. Census of Population and Housing - 2012, 2012. <http://www.statistics.gov.lk/PopHouSat/CPH2012Visualization/htdocs/index.php?usecase=indicator&action=M&ap&indld=10> (17/03/2023).

²⁰⁸ National Council for Mental Health, Sahanaya Resource Information Centre (SRIC). Government Hospitals with psychiatric wards, [undated]. <http://www.sric.lk/page/government-hospitals-with-psychiatric-wards/13> (23/03/2023).

<i>Psychiatric outpatient clinics (Clinics)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DGH Mullaitivu • BH Mankulam • BH Mallavi • DH Oddusuddan • DH Puthukudiyruppu • DH Welioya
<i>Psychiatric specialists</i> ²⁰⁹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 consultatn psychiatrist • 1 psychiatrist • 2 Medical Officers Mental Health
<i>Remarks</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Centre for Welfare and Recovery²¹⁰ built by the Netherlands will open in Mankulam in the course of 2023. Psychiatric specialists from various districts in the northern province are currently being trained in trauma psychiatry by doctors from Georgia.²¹¹ • The nearest hospital with an acute psychiatric ward, DGH Kilinochchi, is around 60 kilometres from the village of Mullaitivu.

Mannar district

In 2012, 99,570 inhabitants lived in the district of Mannar.²¹² The following psychiatric facilities are available in the district of Mannar in 2023.²¹³

<i>Acute Psychiatry Unit</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DGH Mannar
<i>Psychiatric outpatient clinics (Clinics)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DGH Mannar • DH Adampan • DH Nanattan • DH Murunkan • DH Periyapandivirichchan • DH Talaimanar
<i>Psychiatric specialists</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Medical Officers Mental Health
<i>DGH Mannar</i>	Two Medical Officers Mental Health run an acute psychiatric ward with ten beds for inpatients and an outpatient clinic at the district hospital in Mannar. This is open two days a week. The head psychiatrist at Tellippalai Hospital (Jaffna district) looks after the two Medical Officers Mental Health in Mannar. Psychiatric patients with complex illnesses and "forensic patients" ²¹⁴ are transferred to the hospital in Tellippalai. ²¹⁵
<i>Other hospitals</i>	There are further psychiatric outpatient clinics in the district in five smaller hospitals (divisional hospitals). There are also several homes and institutions that admit and care for long-term psychiatric patients. ²¹⁶

²⁰⁹ Interview with a psychiatrist working in Vavuniya, Vavuniya, 07/02/2023.

²¹⁰ See chapter 2.5

²¹¹ Visit country analysis SEM, Base Hospital Chavakachcheri (Jaffna district), 08/02/2023 / Interview with a psychiatrist working in Vavuniya, Vavuniya, 07/02/2023.

²¹² Department of Census & Statistics Sri Lanka, Colombo. Census of Population and Housing - 2012, 2012. <http://www.statistics.gov.lk/PopHouSat/CPH2012Visualization/htdocs/index.php?usecase=indicator&action=M&ap&indId=10> (17/03/2023).

²¹³ National Council for Mental Health, Sahanaya Resource Information Centre (SRIC). Government Hospitals with psychiatric wards, [undated]. <http://www.sric.lk/page/government-hospitals-with-psychiatric-wards/13> (23/03/2023).

²¹⁴ Mentally ill offenders.

²¹⁵ Interview with Dr T. Umaharan, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist, Base Hospital, Tellippalai (Jaffna District), 10.03.2023.

²¹⁶ Interview with Dr T. Umaharan, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist, Base Hospital, Tellippalai (Jaffna District), 10.03.2023. / National Council for Mental Health, Sahanaya Resource Information Centre (SRIC). Government Hospitals with psychiatric wards, [undated]. <http://www.sric.lk/page/government-hospitals-with-psychiatric-wards/13> (23/03/2023).

Eastern Province	
<i>Over 1.5 million inhabitants live in the three districts of Trincomalee, Batticaloa and Ampara in the Eastern Province.²¹⁷ The following psychiatric facilities are available in the Eastern Province in 2023.²¹⁸</i>	
<i>Acute Psychiatry Unit</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DGH Trincomalee • TH Batticaloa • DGH Ampara • BH Kalmunai North
<i>Medium Stay Unit</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DH Mavadvembu • BH Kalmunai North • DH Senarathpura • DH Palamunai
<i>Rehabilitation clinic for addicts</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mavadvembu Alcohol Clinic
<i>Psychiatric outpatient clinics (Clinics)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 12 hospitals in the Trincomalee district • In 13 hospitals in the district of Batticaloa • In 21 hospitals in the Ampara district
<i>Psychiatric specialists²¹⁹</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 chief psychiatrists (consultants) • 7 psychiatrists • 12 Medical Officers Mental Health • 2 occupational therapists • 5 psychiatric social workers
<i>Remarks</i>	Among the Tamil-speaking population, the psychiatry department of the Jaffna University Hospital in Tellippalai near Jaffna (Northern Province) is considered to be the best-organised psychiatric facility. The doctors in Tellippalai are Tamil-speaking and have a reputation for offering "progressive treatments adapted to Tamil society". For this reason, many patients from the Eastern Province travel to Jaffna for consultations and treatment, although psychiatric care is also available in the Eastern Province. ²²⁰

²¹⁷ Department of Census & Statistics Sri Lanka, Colombo. Census of Population and Housing - 2012, 2012. <http://www.statistics.gov.lk/PopHouSat/CPH2012Visualization/htdocs/index.php?usecase=indicator&action=M&ap&indId=10> (17/03/2023).

²¹⁸ National Council for Mental Health, Sahanaya Resource Information Centre (SRIC). Government Hospitals with psychiatric wards, [undated]. <http://www.sric.lk/page/government-hospitals-with-psychiatric-wards/13> (23/03/2023).

²¹⁹ Interview with Dr Asela Gunawardena, Director General of Health Services, Ministry of Health, Colombo, 06.02.2023.

²²⁰ Interview with Prof. Sambasivamoorthy Sivayokan, Jaffna, 10.02.2023.

2. Available therapies

The following therapies²²¹ are available in Sri Lanka:

✓ = available

~ = partially available

x = not available

English Term	Transcription German	Availability	Remarks / Availability in
<i>Outpatient treatment and follow up by a psychiatrist</i>	Ambulante psychiatrische Behandlung	✓	In most institutions, these are the psychiatric outpatient <i>clinics</i> that offer this treatment. Examples: Jaffna, Tellippalai, Point Pedro and Chavakachcheri have such psychiatric <i>clinics</i> . ²²²
<i>Inpatient treatment by a psychiatrist</i>	Stationäre psychiatrische Behandlung	✓	Examples: NIMH Angoda, Tellippalai BH, Point Pedro BH, Chavakachcheri BH, Kilinochchi BH. ²²³
<i>Outpatient treatment and follow up by a psychologist</i>	Ambulante psychologische Behandlung	✓	This possibility exists above all in the Western Province. ²²⁴ No prescription of medication by psychologists. ²²⁵
<i>Inpatient treatment by a psychologist</i>	Stationäre psychologische Behandlung	✓	Possible at Jaffna University Hospital ²²⁶
<i>Psychiatric treatment (of PTSD) by means of cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)</i>	Psychiatrische Behandlung mit Verhaltenstherapie	~	According to several sources, this therapy is possible, e.g. at Jaffna University Hospital ²²⁷ and at BH Kilinochchi. ²²⁸ According to one source, this therapy is only partially available, ²²⁹ another source described it as not possible due to time constraints. ²³⁰
<i>Psychiatric treatment by means of psychotherapy: other than cognitive behavioural therapy</i>	Psychotherapie (ohne Verhaltenstherapie)	✓	Available nationwide. ²³¹
<i>Psychiatric clinical treatment (short term) by a psychiatrist</i>	Psychiatrisch-stationäre Kurzzeitbehandlung	✓	Available nationwide. ²³²
<i>Psychiatric long-term outpatient treatment by a psychiatrist</i>	Psychiatrisch-ambulante Langzeitbehandlung	✓	Available nationwide. ²³³
<i>Psychiatric forced admittance in case necessary</i>	Psychiatrische Zwangseinweisung	✓	
<i>Psychiatric treatment: assisted living / care</i>	Betreute Wohnformen und psychiatrische Spitex	✓	NIMH Angoda. ²³⁴ Kudil Tellippalai. ²³⁵

²²¹ Designations and terms according to the MedCOI standard designation and / or according to interviewees who were interviewed by the SEM country analysis on site in Sri Lanka.

²²² Findings of the SEM Sri Lanka country analysis mission (Colombo, Northern Province), 02.2023

²²³ Findings of the SEM Sri Lanka country analysis mission (Colombo, Northern Province), 02.2023

²²⁴ See chapter 4.3

²²⁵ Interview with Dr Marcel de Roos, Colombo, 06.02.2023.

²²⁶ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 15904 (07/07/2022).

²²⁷ Interview with Counsellors, Jaffna Teaching Hospital, 08.02.2023.

²²⁸ Interview with Dr Jeyaraja, qualified specialist in psychiatry, Kilinochchi, 09.02.2023.

²²⁹ Interview with a psychiatrist working in Vavuniya, Vavuniya, 07/02/2023.

²³⁰ Interview with Dr Mahesan Ganesan, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist, Jaffna, 08.02.2023.

²³¹ See chapter 4.3

²³² See chapter 2.1

²³³ See chapter 2.1

²³⁴ Visit country analysis SEM, National Institute for Mental Health (NIMH), Angoda, 15 February 2023.

²³⁵ Tellippalai (Jaffna district). Visit to country analysis SEM at Kudil Residential Rehabilitation Centre. Visit Kudil, 10.02.2023.

<i>at home by psychiatric nurse</i>			Care of patients at home. ²³⁶
<i>Psychiatric long-term clinical treatment (e.g., for chronic psychotic patients) by a psychiatrist</i>	Psychiatrisch-stationäre Langzeitbehandlung, bspw. bei chronisch-psychotischen Patientinnen und Patienten	✓	NIMH Angoda. ²³⁷ Kudil Tellippalai. ²³⁸ Care of patients at home. ²³⁹
<i>Psychiatric crisis intervention in case of suicide attempt including gastric lavage/stomach irrigation</i>	Psychiatrische Krisenintervention bei Selbstmordversuch	✓	Telephone helplines. ²⁴⁰ Available nationwide. ²⁴¹
<i>Psychiatric clinical treatment in a closed ward/setting (not necessarily forced admittance)</i>	Psychiatrisch-stationäre Behandlung in einer geschlossenen Abteilung (nicht nur nach Zwangseinweisung)	✓	Available nationwide. ²⁴²
<i>Psychiatric treatment of PTSD by means of EMDR²⁴³</i>	Psychiatrische Behandlung mit EMDR	~	Possible in certain facilities ²⁴⁴ - for example in the Base Hospital in Tellippalai. ²⁴⁵ One source describes this type of therapy as not possible. ²⁴⁶
<i>Occupational therapy</i>	Ergotherapie	✓	Available nationwide. ²⁴⁷
<i>Trauma focused therapy</i>	Nicht näher bezeichnete Traumatherapie	✓	Generally available. ²⁴⁸
<i>Telemedicine (especially telepsychiatry)</i>	Telemedizin/Telepsychiatrie: (psychiatrische) Behandlung per Telefon und Video	✓	Available in Colombo and the Northern Province. ²⁴⁹
<i>Interpersonal group therapy IPGT</i>	Interpersonelle Gruppenpsychotherapie	✓	Available in the Northern Province, for example. ²⁵⁰
<i>Electro conversion therapy ECT</i>	Elektrokonvulsions - therapie (EKT)	✓	Possible in BH Kilinochchi, BH Tellippalai, NIMH Angoda. ²⁵¹
<i>Neurolinguistic programming</i>	Neuro-Linguistisches Programmieren	✓	A few specialists offer this therapy. ²⁵²

²³⁶ See chapter 2.7

²³⁷ Visit country analysis SEM, National Institute for Mental Health (NIMH), Angoda, 15 February 2023.

²³⁸ Tellippalai (Jaffna district). Visit to country analysis SEM at Kudil Residential Rehabilitation Centre. Visit Kudil, 10.02.2023.

²³⁹ See chapter 2.7

²⁴⁰ See chapter 2.6

²⁴¹ See chapter 2.1

²⁴² See chapter 2.1

²⁴³ Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing. EMDR Switzerland, Winterthur. 2023. EMDR as a psychotherapy method. <https://emdr-ch.org/emdr/> (23 March 2023).

²⁴⁴ Interview with Dr Asela Gunawardena, Director General of Health Services, Ministry of Health, Colombo, 06.02.2023.

²⁴⁵ Interview with Dr T. Umaharan, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist, Base Hospital, Tellippalai (Jaffna District), 10.03.2023.

²⁴⁶ Interview with Dr Mahesan Ganesan, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist, Jaffna, 08.02.2023.

²⁴⁷ See chapter 4.1

²⁴⁸ Interview with Dr Asela Gunawardena, Director General of Health Services, Ministry of Health, Colombo, 06.02.2023.

²⁴⁹ See chapter 4.6

²⁵⁰ Interview with Dr Jeyaraja, qualified specialist in psychiatry, Kilinochchi, 09.02.2023.

²⁵¹ Findings of the SEM Sri Lanka country analysis mission (Colombo, Northern Province), 02.2023.

²⁵² Interview with Dr T. Umaharan, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist, Base Hospital, Tellippalai (Jaffna District), 10.03.2023.

Innovations in ICD-11 regarding stress-related mental disorders

A qualified psychiatrist from Kilinochchi noted that 12 years after the end of the conflict, many people are suffering from post-war trauma. In this context, he mentions the term *collective trauma*, which has now been included in the WHO classification ICD-11²⁵³.²⁵⁴

Note Country analysis SEM: *The ICD code (International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems) is used to clearly assign diseases worldwide. The 11th revision of the International Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems was introduced worldwide on 1 January 2022 and includes the new term complex post-traumatic stress disorder in section 06 under 6B41. Among other things, collective suffering is discussed there in the culture-related features section. The term collective trauma should be seen in this context.*

[6B41 Complex post-traumatic stress disorder]: Given the severe, prolonged, or recurrent nature of the traumatic events that precipitate, collective suffering and the destruction of social bonds, networks and communities may present as a focal concern or as important related features of the disorder.²⁵⁵

In many countries and at MedCOI²⁵⁶, ICD-10 coding will continue to be used during a transitional phase. One exception is complex PTSD, for which the new ICD-11 coding can be used according to a recommendation published in the Schweizerische Ärztezeitung [Swiss medical journal].²⁵⁷

²⁵³ World Health Organisation (WHO), Geneva. ICD-11 for Mortality and Morbidity Statistics, 01.2023. <https://icd.who.int/browse11/l-m/en> (31.03.2023).

²⁵⁴ Interview with Dr Jeyaraja, qualified specialist in psychiatry, Kilinochchi, 09.02.2023.

²⁵⁵ ICD-11, World Health Organisation WHO, Geneva. 6B41 Complex post traumatic stress disorder. <https://icd.who.int/browse11/l-m/en#/http%3a%2f%2fid.who.int%2fid%2fentity%2f585833559> (30/03/2023).

²⁵⁶ Note Country analysis SEM: MedCOI database, 30 March 2023 [not public].

²⁵⁷ Gerhard Ebner et al. ICD-11 - Recommendation for use in psychiatry. In: Schweizerische Ärztezeitung, Muttentz. 08.03.2023. Ausgabe 2023/10. <https://saez.ch/article/doi/saez.2023.21604v> (30.03.2023). <https://www.pdag.ch/fuer-patientinnen-patienten-und-angehoerige/alle-angebote/elektrokonvulsionstherapie> (30.03.2023). / MedCOI database, 30.03.2023. [not public]. / Federal Institute for Drugs and Medical Devices, Bfarm, Bonn. 2023. *International Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, 11th Revision*. <https://www.bfarm.de/EN/Code-systems/Classifications/ICD/ICD-11/node.html#:~:text=For%20both%20mortality%20and%20morbidity,10%2D%20GM%20for%20morbidity%20coding>. (30.03.2023).

3. Medicinal products (lists)

MedCOI medication list (database query from 24 March 2023 with entries for the period from 7 July 2022 to 7 March 2023)

Active ingredient	Availability	
	Yes	no
Alprazolam ²⁵⁸	x	
Amisulpride ²⁵⁹	x	
Amitriptyline ²⁶⁰	x	
Aripiprazole ²⁶¹		x
Aripiprazole depot injections ²⁶²		x
Benzatropine (for the treatment of side effects of antipsychotics/antiparkinsonian drugs) ²⁶³	x	
Biperiden ²⁶⁴		x
Bromperidol ²⁶⁵		x
Bromperidol decanoate depot injection ²⁶⁶	x	
Carbamazepine ²⁶⁷	x	
Citalopram ²⁶⁸	x	
Clonazepam ²⁶⁹	x	
Clozapine ²⁷⁰	x	
Diazepam ²⁷¹	x	
Duloxetine	x	
Escitalopram ²⁷²	x	
Fluoxetine ²⁷³	x	
Flupentixol decanoate depot injection ²⁷⁴	x	
Fluphenazine decanoate depot injection ²⁷⁵		x
Flurazepam ²⁷⁶		x
Fluvoxamine ²⁷⁷	x	
Haloperidol decanoate depot injection		x
Imipramine ²⁷⁸	x	
Lamotrigine ²⁷⁹	x	
Lorazepam ²⁸⁰		x

²⁵⁸ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16589 (07/03/2023).

²⁵⁹ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16002 (09/08/2022).

²⁶⁰ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16002 (09/08/2022).

²⁶¹ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 15904 (07/07/2022).

²⁶² International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16002 (09/08/2022).

²⁶³ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16175 (28.10.2022).

²⁶⁴ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16175 (28.10.2022).

²⁶⁵ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16002 (09/08/2022).

²⁶⁶ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16002 (09/08/2022).

²⁶⁷ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16002 (09/08/2022).

²⁶⁸ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 15904 (07/07/2022).

²⁶⁹ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16002 (09/08/2022).

²⁷⁰ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 15904 (07/07/2022).

²⁷¹ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16466 (23.01.2023).

²⁷² International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 15904 (07/07/2022).

²⁷³ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 15904 (07/07/2022).

²⁷⁴ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16002 (09/08/2022).

²⁷⁵ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16002 (09/08/2022).

²⁷⁶ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16002 (09/08/2022).

²⁷⁷ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 15904 (07/07/2022).

²⁷⁸ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16002 (09/08/2022).

²⁷⁹ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16002 (09/08/2022).

²⁸⁰ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16002 (09/08/2022).

Lormetazepam ²⁸¹		X
Melatonin ²⁸²	X	
Mianserin ²⁸³		X
Mirtazapine ²⁸⁴	X	
Olanzapine ²⁸⁵	X	
Olanzapine pamoate depot injection ²⁸⁶		X
Oxazepam ²⁸⁷		X
Paliperidone ²⁸⁸		X
Paroxetine ²⁸⁹	X	
Pipamperone ²⁹⁰		X
Quetiapine ²⁹¹	X	
Risperidone ²⁹²	X	
Risperidone depot injection ²⁹³		X
Sertraline ²⁹⁴	X	
Temazepam ²⁹⁵		X
Topiramate ²⁹⁶	X	
Trazodone ²⁹⁷	X	
Trihexyphenidyl ²⁹⁸		X
Venlafaxine ²⁹⁹	X	
Vortioxetine ³⁰⁰		X
Zolpidem ³⁰¹	X	
Zopiclone ³⁰²		X
Zuclopenthixol ³⁰³		X

²⁸¹ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16466 (23.01.2023).

²⁸² International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16466 (23.01.2023).

²⁸³ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16002 (09/08/2022).

²⁸⁴ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16589 (07/03/2023).

²⁸⁵ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 15904 (07/07/2022).

²⁸⁶ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16002 (09/08/2022).

²⁸⁷ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16589 (07/03/2023).

²⁸⁸ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16175 (28.10.2022).

²⁸⁹ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16002 (09/08/2022).

²⁹⁰ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16002 (09/08/2022).

²⁹¹ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 15904 (07/07/2022).

²⁹² International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16175 (28.10.2022).

²⁹³ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16002 (09/08/2022).

²⁹⁴ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 15904 (07/07/2022).

²⁹⁵ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16466 (23.01.2023).

²⁹⁶ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16002 (09/08/2022).

²⁹⁷ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16002 (09/08/2022).

²⁹⁸ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16175 (28.10.2022).

²⁹⁹ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16002 (09/08/2022).

³⁰⁰ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16002 (09/08/2022).

³⁰¹ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16466 (23.01.2023).

³⁰² International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16466 (23.01.2023).

³⁰³ International SOS. EUAA MedCOI number AVA 16002 (09/08/2022).

Drug list Union Chemists (selection; as of 14/02/2023):³⁰⁴

Active ingredient	Availability	
	Yes	no
Amisulpride	x	
Amitriptyline	x	
Aripiprazole		x
Biperiden		x
Bromperidol	x	
Carbamazepine	x	
Citalopram	x	
Clonazepam	x	
Diazepam	x	
Duloxetine	x	
Escitalopram	x	
Flurazepam		x
Imipramine		x
Lamotrigine	x	
Lorazepam	x	
Melatonin	x	
Mianserin		x
Mirtazapine		x
Oxazepam		x
Paliperidone		x
Paroxetine	x	
Pipamperon		x
Quetiapine	x	
Risperidone	x	
Temazepam		x
Topiramate	x	
Trazodone		x
Venlafaxine	x	
Vortioxetine		x
Zaleplon		x
Zolpidem	x	
Zopiclone		x
Zuclopenthixol	x	

³⁰⁴ Interview with Shalintha Rodrigo, Responsible Operations & Business Strategy, Union Chemists (Pte) Limited Pharmacy, Colombo, 14 February 2023.

Medication stock in the ward room of the inpatient psychiatry department of Point Pedro Base Hospital (visit on 9 February 2023)³⁰⁵

Drug or active ingredient name on site	Active ingredient German	Effect / Indication ³⁰⁶
Aldactone	Spironolactone	Antihypertensive
Amlodipine	Amlodipine	Antihypertensive
Amitriptyline	Amitriptyline	Antidepressant
Amoxicillin	Amoxicillin	Antibiotic (penicillin)
Artane Benzhexol	Trihexyphenidyl	Parkinson's medication, also indicated for drug-induced parkinsonism ³⁰⁷
Atenolol	Atenolol	Antihypertensive
Aripiprazole	Aripiprazole	Antipsychotic
Prednisolone	Prednisolone	Anti-inflammatory, anti-allergic; various indications ³⁰⁸
Atorvastatin	Atorvastatin	Cholesterol-lowering drug
Azithromycin	Azithromycin	Antibiotic
Brufen	Ibuprofen	Analgesic and anti-inflammatory
Captopril	Captopril	Antihypertensive
Carbamazepine	Carbamazepine	Antiepileptic, antipsychotic; also indicated for neuralgia and alcohol withdrawal syndrome
Cefuroxime	Cefuroxime	Antibiotic
Certizine	Cetirizine	Antiallergic agent
Chloroperazine	Prochlorperazine maleate	Antipsychotic, antiemetic ³⁰⁹
Betaserc	Betahistine	Against dizziness
Choledyl	Oxtriphylline & Guaifenesin	Bronchodilator, expectorant ³¹⁰
Clonazepam	Clonazepam	Antiepileptic
Clozapine	Clozapine	Neuroleptic
Diazepam	Diazepam	Anxiolytic
Diltiazem	Diltiazem	Antihypertensive
Domperidone	Domperidone	Antiemetic ³¹¹
Doxycycline	Doxycycline	Antibiotic
Dulcolax	Bisacodyl	Laxative
Enalapril	Enalapril	Antihypertensive
Famotidine	Famotidine	Gastric acid inhibitor ³¹²
Ferrosulphates	Ferrous sulphate	For iron deficiency
Flagyl	Metronidazole	Antibiotic, antiparasitic
Floxacin	Norfloxacin ³¹³	Antibiotic
Fluphenazine ad inj.	Fluphenazine ³¹⁴	Neuroleptic (depot injection)
Folic acid	Folic acid	Anti-anaemic ³¹⁵
Gliclazide	Gliclazide	Oral antidiabetic
Haloperidol	Haloperidol	Neuroleptic

³⁰⁵ Country analysis mission SEM, Base Hospital Point Pedro (Jaffna district), 09.02.2023.

³⁰⁶ Unless otherwise stated, the sources for indication and mechanisms of action are taken from the Swiss Drug Compendium, Bern. 2023. <https://compendium.ch/> (27.03.2023).

³⁰⁷ Medikamio, Vienna. 21.08.2022. Artane 2 mg. <https://medikamio.com/de-de/medikamente/artane-2-mg/pil> (27.03.2023).

³⁰⁸ Prednisolone is used for inflammatory, allergic, rheumatic and other diseases. Swissmedic, Bern. Swiss Agency for Therapeutic Products. Information for healthcare professionals Prednisolon Streuli®. www.swissmedicinfo.ch/?Lang=DE (27.03.2023).

³⁰⁹ Note Country analysis SEM: Antiemetic: against nausea and vomiting.

³¹⁰ MedBroadcast, Canada. 2023. choledyl expectorant elixir. <https://www.medbroadcast.com/drug/getdrug/choledyl-expectorant-elixir> (28/03/2023).

³¹¹ Note Country analysis SEM: for nausea and vomiting.

³¹² Pharmawiki, Disentis/Mustér. Famotidine. 15.05.2020. <https://www.pharmawiki.ch/wiki/index.php?wiki=Famotidin> (28.03.2023).

³¹³ Medikamio, Vienna. 19.02.2023. Floxacin 400 mg film-coated tablets. <https://medikamio.com/de-at/medikamente/floxacin-400-mg-filmtabletten/pil> (27.03.2023).

³¹⁴ Pharmawiki, Disentis/Mustér. Fluphenazine. 20.11.2013. <https://www.pharmawiki.ch/wiki/index.php?wiki=Fluphenazin> (30.03.2023).

³¹⁵ Country analysis note SEM: dehydrating drug. In case of anaemia.

Haloperidol ad inj.		Neuroleptic (depot injection)
HCT	Hydrochlorothiazide	Diuretic ³¹⁶
Inderal	Propranolol hydrochloride	Antihypertensive; also after a heart attack, for heart failure and cardiac arrhythmia
KLC	Potassium chloride	In case of potassium deficiency, e.g. use or abuse of diuretics and/or laxatives, heart medication and liver disease.
Largactil	Chlorpromazine ³¹⁷	Neuroleptic
Lasix	Furosemide	Diuretic
Librium	Chlordiazepoxide	Anxiolytic
Lithium carbonate	Lithium	Antidepressant
Losatron	Losartan	Antihypertensive
Metformin	Metformin	Oral antidiabetic
Nifedipine	Nifedipine	Antihypertensive, also for angina pectoris (chest pain)
Olanzapine	Olanzapine	Neuroleptic
Omeprazole	Omeprazole	Gastric acid inhibitor
Paracetamol	Paracetamol	Painkiller
Piriton	Chlorphenamine ³¹⁸	Antihistamine (for hay fever and other allergic conditions)
Rastinon	Tolbutamide ³¹⁹	Oral antidiabetic
Risperidone	Risperidone	Neuroleptic
Sinemet (Sinemet)	Levodopa&Carbidopa	Parkinson's remedy
Stelazine	Trifluoperazine ³²⁰	Neuroleptic
Stemetil (Stemetil)	Prochlorperazine ³²¹	Antiemetic ³²²
Sulfasalazine	Sulfasalazine	For inflammatory diseases (Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, rheumatoid arthritis)
Tofranil (Tofranil)	Imipramine ³²³	Antidepressant
Vermox	Mebendazole	Anti-worm medication
Vitamin C	Vitamin C	For vitamin C deficiency or increased need for vitamin C
Voltaren	Diclofenac	Anti-pain and anti-inflammatory, antipyretic

4 Psychiatric professions

[This annex has been removed since it was a German translation of psychiatric professions in English]

³¹⁶ Country analysis note SEM: dehydrating drug.

³¹⁷ Pharmawiki, Disentis/Mustér. Chlorpromazine. 21.05.2020.

<https://www.pharmawiki.ch/wiki/index.php?wiki=Chlorpromazin> (30.03.2023).

³¹⁸ National Health Service, London. 05.11.2021. Chlorphenamine (Piriton).

<https://www.nhs.uk/medicines/chlorphenamine-including-piriton/> (30.03.2023).

³¹⁹ Arznei-Telegramm, Berlin. 1991. https://www.arznei-telegramm.de/html/1991_11/9111102_01.html (30.03.2023). / Pharmawiki, Disentis/Mustér. Tolbutamide. 14/06/2012.

<https://www.pharmawiki.ch/wiki/index.php?wiki=Tolbutamid> (30/03/2023).

³²⁰ MediLexi, Bordesholm. 13.11.2021. <https://medlexi.de/Trifluoperazin> (30.03.2023). / Webmd, New York. 2023. Stelazine Tablet. Uses, Side Effects, and More. <https://www.webmd.com/drugs/2/drug-6572/stelazine-oral/details> (30/03/2023).

³²¹ News Medical Life Sciences, Manchester. 2023. Stemetil. <https://www.news-medical.net/drugs/Stemetil.aspx> (30/03/2023).

³²² Country analysis note SEM: for nausea and vomiting.

³²³ Pharmawiki, Disentis/Mustér. Imipramine. 12.05.2020.

<https://www.pharmawiki.ch/wiki/index.php?wiki=Imipramin> (30.03.2023).