

Nutritional Psychiatry

Nutritional psychiatry is an emerging field highlighting the significant role of diet and nutrients in mental health. This session explores three pivotal areas of research that collectively advance our understanding and implementation of nutritional interventions in mental health care.

The first presentation focuses on the NUTRIMUM trial, which investigates the efficacy of micronutrients in treating antenatal depression. The trial demonstrates that additional antenatal micronutrients not only improve maternal mental health but also enhance neonatal outcomes, suggesting a promising, safe, and effective treatment for antenatal depression. This research underscores the potential of dietary interventions to influence both maternal and infant health positively.

The second presentation addresses the broader role of nutrition professionals in mental health services. With high rates of physical comorbidity in individuals with mental illness, nutrition interventions become crucial for improving life expectancy and overall health. This project aims to standardize and enhance the quality of nutrition-related tasks in mental health settings globally. It provides key recommendations for integrating dietary interventions effectively into mental health services, emphasizing the need for an international standard and consistent professional roles.

The third presentation examines the complex interplay between cultural practices and nutritional psychiatry, using betel quid chewing in Taiwan as a case study. It highlights the neurophysiological effects of betel quid and the health risks associated with its use. This research calls for comprehensive management strategies and further studies to mitigate the adverse health effects while understanding its role in well-being and addiction.

Together, these presentations illuminate the critical intersections of nutrition, mental health, and clinical practice, advocating for integrative approaches to enhance mental health outcomes through dietary interventions.