

Capacity Building Programmes on Drug Abuse Prevention organised by the Department of Psychiatric Social Work, Institute of Psychiatry, Kolkata

A series of Capacity Building Programmes on Drug Abuse Prevention were successfully organised across various locations in Kolkata, West Bengal, between 17–24 April 2025. These programmes were designed to raise awareness, enhance knowledge, and equip diverse stakeholders of society with effective strategies to combat drug abuse. Funded by the National Institute of Social Defence (NISD) and conducted by the Department of Psychiatric Social Work, Institute of Psychiatry – Centre of Excellence (IPGME&R-SSKM), Kolkata, the initiative was originally planned to accommodate 150 participants (25 in each of the six programmes). However, with exceptional efforts and efficient planning, the programmes successfully reached 602 participants from different categories across the state, all while maintaining the highest standards of quality and engagement.

I had the privilege of being invited as a Resource Person for one of these landmark events held at the Swami Vivekananda State Police Academy, Barrackpore, on 29 April 2025. During this programme, I delivered two intensive sessions: "Identifying and Assessing Drug Abuse" and "Legal, Ethical, and Human Rights Considerations in Drug Abuse Prevention and Intervention"

I extend my sincere thanks to Mr. Mayank Kumar, Project Head & Assistant Professor, Dept. of Psychiatric Social Work, IOP-COE, for this opportunity and his visionary leadership. It was truly a commendable initiative, one that I believe will have a long-lasting impact on community safety and drug prevention efforts.



A Unique and Praiseworthy Approach

One of the most remarkable aspects of this initiative was the involvement of twenty-four senior faculty members from outside West Bengal, all of whom are **Psychiatric Social Work (PSW) Faculty of Professionals**. Typically, academic or training programmes are dominated by medical professionals and tend to rely on locally available resource persons from multiple disciplines. However, the conscious decision to exclusively engage Psychiatric Social Work (PSW) faculty from across the country reflects a progressive and pioneering approach.

This concept aligns with the philosophy behind the establishment of the Indian Journal of Psychiatric Social Work (IJPSW), "*a platform of PSWs, for PSWs, and by PSWs.*" The vision is to address the existing gaps in the PSW fraternity by creating dedicated spaces for PSW professionals to share research, knowledge, and lived experiences. This visionary thought, along with the initiation and conceptualisation by Mr. Mayank Kumar, is truly noteworthy. I believe it will have a long-lasting impact and will serve as an inspiring model for fellow PSW professionals across India in the future.

Kamlesh Kumar Sahu

Associate Professor of Psychiatric Social Work

Department of Psychiatry, Govt. Medical College and Hospital, Chandigarh, India