National Institute of Mental Health Encyclopedia Article

National Institute of Mental Health

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National Institute of Mental Health

U.S. government agency that conducts and supports research on mental illness and mental health.

The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) is the U.S. government agency that conducts and supports research on mental illness and mental health. NIMH is a component of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Areas of research include the **brain,** behavior and mental health services. NIMH is dedicated to improving the mental health of the American people, fostering better understanding, diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation of mental and brain disorders, and preventing mental illness.

In order to carry out its mission, NIMH supports research by awarding NIMH grants to scientists working in universities or other research facilities to study all aspects of mental illness from biological to social, and by identifying specific areas where research is needed. NIMH also supports a large in-house research program on the causes of and new treatments for mental illnesses. In addition, it collects and disseminates statistical information to scientists and researchers, trains scientists to fill needed research positions, and prepares and distributes a wide variety of written materials, audiovisual materials, and educational exhibits.

Among the key areas of research interest for NIMH are neuroscience and behavioral science, including sciences basic to the understanding of the anatomical and chemical basis of brain disorders; and the most prevalent mental disorders and their causes and prevention, such as **schizophrenia,** mood disorders, anxiety disorders, **eating disorders,** and Alzheimer's disease.

The National Institute of Mental Health communicates current research, diagnosis and treatment information to professionals and the public through conferences, symposia and meetings, and works closely with professional and voluntary organizations and other federal agencies.

For Further Study

Organizations

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