

Practice Test 11

READING SUB-TEST – PART C

In this part of the test, there is a text about an aspect of healthcare.
Choose the answer (A, B, C, or D) that you think fits best according to the text.

Text A – The Impact and Drivers of Mental Health Disorders

Paragraph 1

Mental health disorders are increasingly recognised as a major public health concern worldwide, although their causes and impacts are complex and not fully understood. Conditions such as depression, anxiety, and stress-related disorders affect individuals across all age groups and socioeconomic backgrounds. While improved awareness has contributed to higher reported prevalence rates, some experts argue that modern societal pressures may also be contributing to a genuine rise in cases.

Paragraph 2

Global estimates indicate that a significant proportion of the population will experience a mental health condition at some point in their lives. However, these figures should be interpreted cautiously, as many cases remain undiagnosed, particularly in regions with limited access to healthcare services. In addition, variations in diagnostic criteria and reporting practices may influence the accuracy of prevalence data.

Paragraph 3

The consequences of mental health disorders extend beyond psychological distress. Individuals affected may experience reduced productivity, difficulties in maintaining social relationships, and an increased risk of developing physical health conditions. For

example, depression has been associated with cardiovascular disease and impaired immune function, suggesting a complex interaction between mental and physical health.

Paragraph 4

The economic burden associated with mental health disorders is considerable. Increased healthcare costs, workplace absenteeism, and reduced productivity contribute to significant financial losses at both individual and national levels. Although these costs are well documented, their long-term implications for healthcare systems and economic stability remain an area of ongoing concern.

Paragraph 5

A range of lifestyle-related factors have been proposed as contributors to the increasing prevalence of mental health disorders. Social isolation, excessive use of digital technologies, and work-related stress are frequently cited as potential influences. However, the extent to which these factors directly cause mental health problems, rather than simply being associated with them, continues to be debated.

Paragraph 6

Workplace conditions are also recognised as important determinants of mental health. High job demands, limited support, and job insecurity may increase stress levels and negatively affect well-being. Nevertheless, individual resilience and coping strategies can moderate these effects, highlighting the importance of both environmental and personal factors in shaping mental health outcomes.

Text B – Policy Responses and Future Directions in Mental Health

Paragraph 1

There is ongoing debate regarding the most effective strategies for addressing mental health disorders, particularly given the complexity of their underlying causes. While

individual-level interventions such as counselling and pharmacological treatment remain central to clinical care, there is increasing recognition that these approaches alone may be insufficient. As a result, attention has shifted towards broader social and environmental strategies that aim to address the wider determinants of mental health.

Paragraph 2

Public health initiatives have traditionally focused on raising awareness and reducing stigma associated with mental illness. Although such campaigns may contribute to improved understanding and help-seeking behaviour, evidence suggests that their impact on reducing the overall burden of mental health disorders is limited. This has led some experts to argue that awareness-based approaches, while valuable, need to be supported by more comprehensive and systemic interventions.

Paragraph 3

Access to mental health services continues to present a significant challenge in many regions. Shortages of trained professionals, uneven distribution of services, and financial barriers can all contribute to delays in diagnosis and treatment. In some cases, individuals may not seek help at all, either due to stigma or lack of available services, further complicating efforts to address mental health needs effectively.

Paragraph 4

In response to these challenges, governments have introduced national mental health strategies aimed at improving service delivery and accessibility. These initiatives often prioritise early intervention, integration of mental health services into primary care systems, and the development of community-based support networks. However, the success of such strategies is not uniform and depends heavily on factors such as funding, workforce capacity, and policy implementation.

Paragraph 5

Despite these policy efforts, significant limitations remain. Variations in political priorities, resource allocation, and healthcare infrastructure can restrict the effectiveness of

national strategies. In some instances, policies may exist in principle but are not fully implemented in practice, reducing their potential impact. This gap between policy development and real-world application continues to be a major concern.

Paragraph 6

Looking ahead, future approaches to mental health care are likely to involve a combination of established and emerging interventions. Digital mental health tools and community-based programmes are increasingly being explored as potential solutions. However, their effectiveness is not yet fully established, and their success will depend on careful evaluation, appropriate integration into existing systems, and sustained investment.

Paragraph 7

Ultimately, addressing mental health disorders requires a coordinated and multidisciplinary response. Collaboration between healthcare providers, policymakers, employers, and communities is essential to tackle both the underlying causes and the broader consequences of mental illness. Without such integrated efforts, it is unlikely that the growing global burden of mental health disorders can be effectively reduced.