The result of collaboration between Ministry of Health of Belize, PAHO Representation Belize, WHO Mental health team and PAHO Mental Health Sub-regional Advisor. Special thanks to Dr Cayetano and Ms Jones for their efforts and contribution to the report.

Excerpt:

"In the past, mental health services in Belize have focused primarily on institutional psychiatric care and care for the severely mentally disabled. Now, mental health services are steadily shifting to include treatment in the community in an effort to reduce the current treatment gap by improving mental health services’ accessibility and acceptability. In the early 1990s, an essential step was taken by the Ministry of Health to begin a program with a new category of health workers, the Psychiatric Nurse Practitioners. Through this program the National Mental Health Program provides outreach mental health services to people in the community, and at the primary care level. Now, mental health outpatient clinics are located in each district in the country and are fully operated by a psychiatric nurse practitioner, under the supervision of a consultant psychiatrist. Because psychiatric nurses have been successfully integrated into the health care service network over the last decade, outpatient care has increased while inpatient
psychiatric care has decreased."