Handout 8: Types of Intervention in the Mental Health Sector

- **Primary health care services** such as doctors in general practice - their role is to identify, manage and where appropriate refer to specialist mental health services.

- **Psychiatric hospitals/units** - up until 30 years ago, people with mental health problems, particularly psychotic illness, often spent long periods of time in psychiatric hospitals, where they became institutionalised. Now, admission to a psychiatric hospital or unit is seen as a temporary measure when a person cannot cope at home because his/her symptoms have become worse, and the person can no longer look after themselves. Such hospitals/units are based on a clinical model of intervention.

- **Community mental health teams** - these teams provide assessment, case management, supervision and support for people with a mental illness living in the community. They also can provide support and information to the families of people with a mental illness.

- **Residential units/group homes** - these provide community located supported accommodation for people with a mental illness/psychiatric disability.

- **Crisis care/emergency teams** - these teams provide 24 hour emergency help for people with a mental illness who are in crisis. These teams are mobile and can assess people in their homes or on the street.

- **Psychosocial rehabilitation programs** - these can include work-oriented and vocational training, supported employment, and social and living skills training. One model of vocational rehabilitation services is the Clubhouse model, where people with a mental illness become members of a 'club' which runs employment and living skills programs from the clubhouse.

- **Consumer-run models** such as self-help groups; e.g., GROW, Schizophrenia Fellowship, Association of Relatives and Friends of the Emotionally and Mentally Ill - these groups provide support and information to people with a mental illness and/or their relatives and friends. They frequently also advocate on behalf of people with a mental illness and their families and lobby governments for funding and services.

- **Mental health promotion services** - these services are focused on the promotion of emotional and social wellbeing in communities and thereby in individuals, by improving the social, physical and economic environments that affect mental health.

- **Mental health prevention services** - these programs are aimed at decreasing the incidence of mental health problems.