Mental health and snakebite in West Bengal, India:
A survey – February 2024

Facts:
- It is estimated that 5 million snakebites occur annually, with snakebite listed by the World Health Organization as a priority neglected tropical disease.
- Previous studies have found that prevalence of depression ranges from 25-54% amongst snakebite survivors. Similarly, 8-43% of snakebite survivors were found to experience PTSD.

Background:
- Snakebite can have chronic impacts on survivors’ physical and psychological wellbeing.
- Understanding the prevalence of mental illness among snakebite survivors is crucial to the development of comprehensive support from health systems and providers.

Aims:
- To determine the prevalence of depression and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) amongst snakebite survivors in the Sundarbans, India.

Methods:
- In-person surveys will be conducted in community settings in one block of the Sundarbans (West Bengal).
- Participants will be adults who have been bitten by a snake in the past year.
- Snakebite survivors will be identified using a community knowledge approach.

Impact:
- This research aims to improve understanding of how snakebite affects mental health, leading to better long-term care practices.
- The results of the study will be disseminated to local stakeholders through an online workshop, thereby improving awareness at the community level regarding the psychological experiences of snakebite survivors.

Project Cycle: 2023–2024
Supporters: Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, UK
Wellcome Trust, UK
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