The global burden of mental health conditions is substantial, impacting the quality and length of life of billions of people around the globe. The World Health Organization has launched a 5-year (2019-2023) special initiative on mental health in 12 priority countries in response to the increasing prevalence of mental health disorders and growing concern about their impact on populations. Recent data also point to the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health, with 4 in 10 adults in the United States reporting symptoms of anxiety and depression in early 2021. High-quality real-world data and economic evaluations of interventions to prevent, diagnose, and treat mental health conditions and increase mental well-being are critical to support appropriate resource allocation decisions and national and global policy development.

Economic evaluations of mental health conditions present additional challenges in methodology and design, including issues around the measurement of clinical effectiveness, outcomes measurement, the collection of patient-reported outcomes, privacy and confidentiality rules around mental health data, stigma, health equity issues for populations experiencing marginalization, and caregiver and societal burden. The themed section will also explore factors that will potentially disrupt the field of mental health, including the use of electronic health records and real-world data to inform economic evaluations and cost-effectiveness analyses, the use of artificial intelligence to prevent and diagnose mental health conditions, the availability of digital therapeutics for treatment, the increasing interest in mindfulness and meditation as potentially effective and cost-effective interventions, and more.

Please direct any content-related questions to the Guest Editors, Jagpreet Chhatwal, PhD (jagchhatwal@mgh.harvard.edu) and Rachael Fleurence, PhD, MSc (rachael.fleurence@nih.gov).

Submissions received before May 31, 2024 will have the best chance of being published in Value in Health in 2024. All submissions will undergo the journal's peer-review process before the Editors make final decisions about papers to be included in this themed section of Value in Health.

Authors should submit manuscripts through the journal's online submission system at https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/valueinhealth and be sure to indicate in their cover letter that the paper is to be considered as part of the Mental Health theme.

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