Understanding costs and efficacy of treatments is a critical part of any health care services. Clinicians need to be aware of the costs of their actions. An inextricable but commonly underestimated link to the productivity of a nation is its population’s mental health. Yerramilli and Bipeta, [1] highlight the negative economical consequences in a well referenced and thorough review of both the direct and indirect costs of mental illness on society. Highly pertinent to our developing roles as professionals is the increasing responsibility of those within the mental health sector to sensitize policy makers to the rapidly expanding needs of our patients and advocate for investments that will prevent a decline in their mental health. It is becoming increasingly recognized that mental health promotion and prevention is the most effective strategy to reduce the burden of mental illness. Moreover, as these authors emphasize the susceptibility to psychiatric morbidity of all socio-economic groups in that none are immune, policy makers need to pay heed. The costs and outcomes vary across cultures and settings particularly in developing nations where the more evident risk factors form a vicious circle between poverty and mental illness on the one hand and infection and health on the other. The emphasis on mental health as a public health priority is crucial in reducing the burden of disease in due course. Emphasized within this review is the necessity to establish healthy social communities whereby mental health is seen as a balance between oneself and one’s social environment. If effectively implemented this strategy is certain to help reduce the genesis of mental illness and produces a healthier more productive society overall.

Acknowledgements: Nil

References

Address for correspondence Prof. Dinesh Bhugra. Institute of Psychiatry, King’s College, PO25, HSPRD, DeCrespigny Park, London. SE5 8AF
Email: dinesh.bhugra@kcl.ac.uk

How to cite this article: Till A, Bhugra D. Economics of mental health: cost of neglect. AP J Psychol Med 2013; 14 (1):11.