Trends in Psychotic Experiences in Thailand: Informing the Planned Early Intervention Service at Somdet Chaopraya Institute of Psychiatry

Suttha Supanya, MD, FRCPsychT
and the 2023 Thai National Mental Health Survey Working Group

Somdet Chaopraya Institute of Psychiatry, Department of Mental Health, Bangkok, THAILAND
At
The Biennial International Congress on Mental Health 2024 & The Asian Congress of Schizophrenia Research 2024
November 2024, Singapore

กระทรวงสาธารณสุข
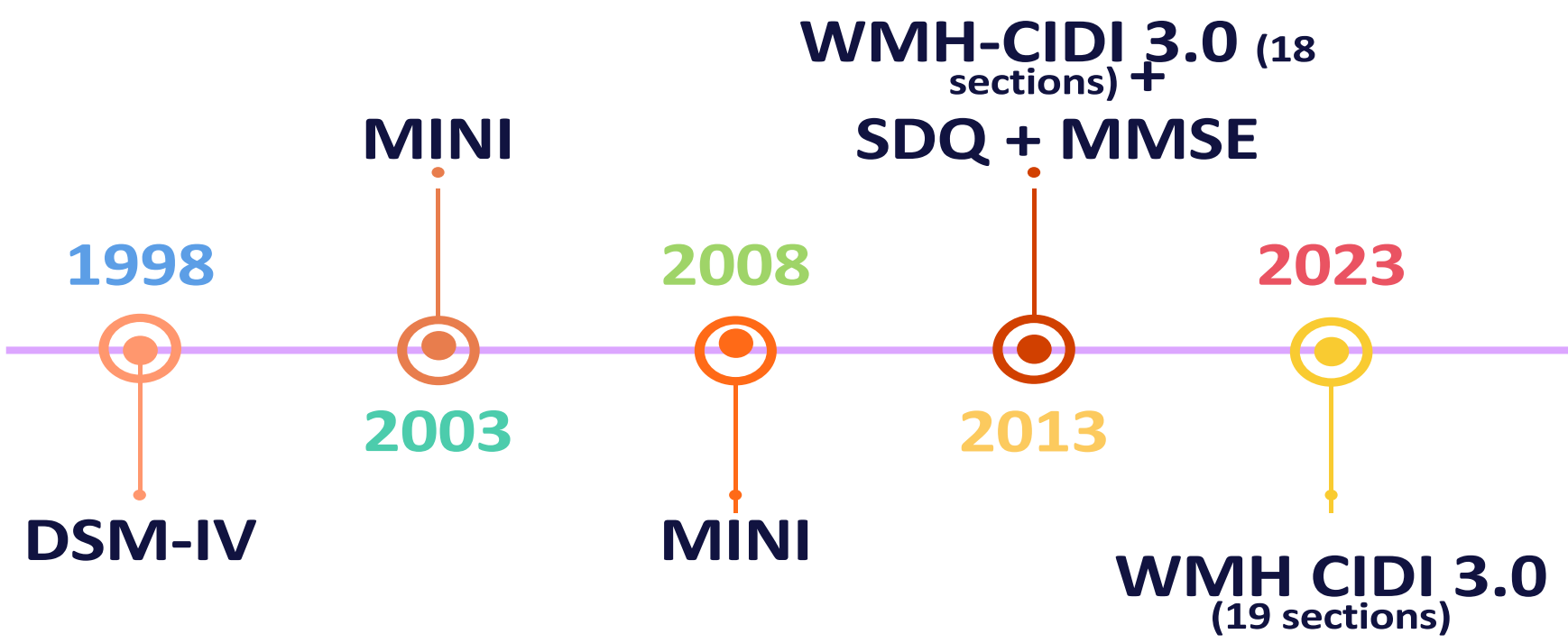กรมสุขภาพจิต
DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

Introduction:

- Psychotic experiences (PE) serve as early indicators of schizophrenia and related disorders.

- Monitoring PE prevalence across Thailand provides essential insights for timely mental health interventions.

- This study compares findings from the 2023 Thai National Mental Health Survey with 2013 data, highlighting the need for establishing Thailand's first Early Intervention (EI) service for psychosis at the Somdet Chaopraya Institute of Psychiatry (SCIP) in Bangkok.

Objectives:

1. To compare the PE prevalence from 2013 and 2023 to identify trends and demographic shifts.

2. To identify high-prevalence populations to inform targeted interventions, particularly in Bangkok.

3. To support the establishment of Thailand's first EI service for psychosis at SCIP, focusing on early detection and treatment for vulnerable groups.

Thailand National Mental Health Surveys

1998 — DSM-IV
2003 — MINI
2008 — MINI
2013 — WMH-CIDI 3.0 (18 sections) + SDQ + MMSE
2023 — WMH CIDI 3.0 (19 sections)

Methods:

- This study reports on preliminary data from the 2023 Thai National Mental Health Survey, which utilised a cross-sectional design to evaluate psychotic experiences (PE) across a representative sample of Thai adults.

- The survey employed the World Health Organization Composite International Diagnostic Interview (WHO-CIDI) to capture lifetime and 12-month PE prevalence.

- A multi-stage sampling technique was used to ensure representation from all five regions of Thailand—Bangkok, the Northeast, North, Central, South and Deep-South.

- Key socio-economic variables, including age, gender, education level, and income, were recorded, allowing for a descriptive comparison across different population subgroups.

- Preliminary comparisons were made between regions, highlighting Bangkok as an area of particular focus given the city's unique urban stressors and potential role as a focal point for mental health interventions.

Results:

Of the 4800 nationally representative respondents surveyed, 4157 (86.6%) completed the questionnaires, whose data were used in all analyses.

Region	Respondents	
	n	%
Bangkok	643	15.5
Central	726	17.4
North	705	16.9
Northeast	667	16.0
South	704	16.9
Deep-south	716	17.2
Total	4,161	4,161 (100.0)

- **Overall Trends**

  - Lifetime PE prevalence: ↓ 5.9% (2013) to 3.0% (2023)
  - 12-month PE prevalence: ↓ 1.4% (2013) to 1.1% (2023)

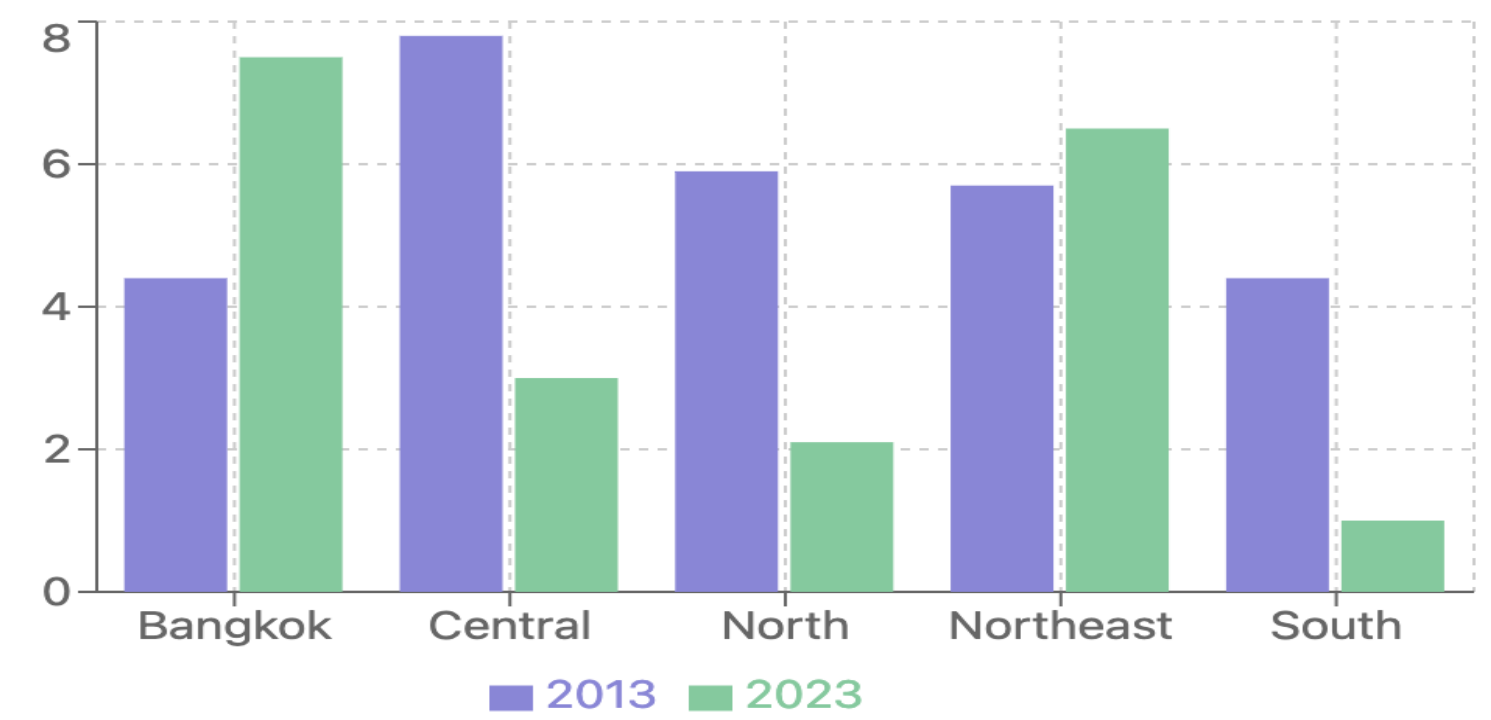### PE Prevalence Comparison
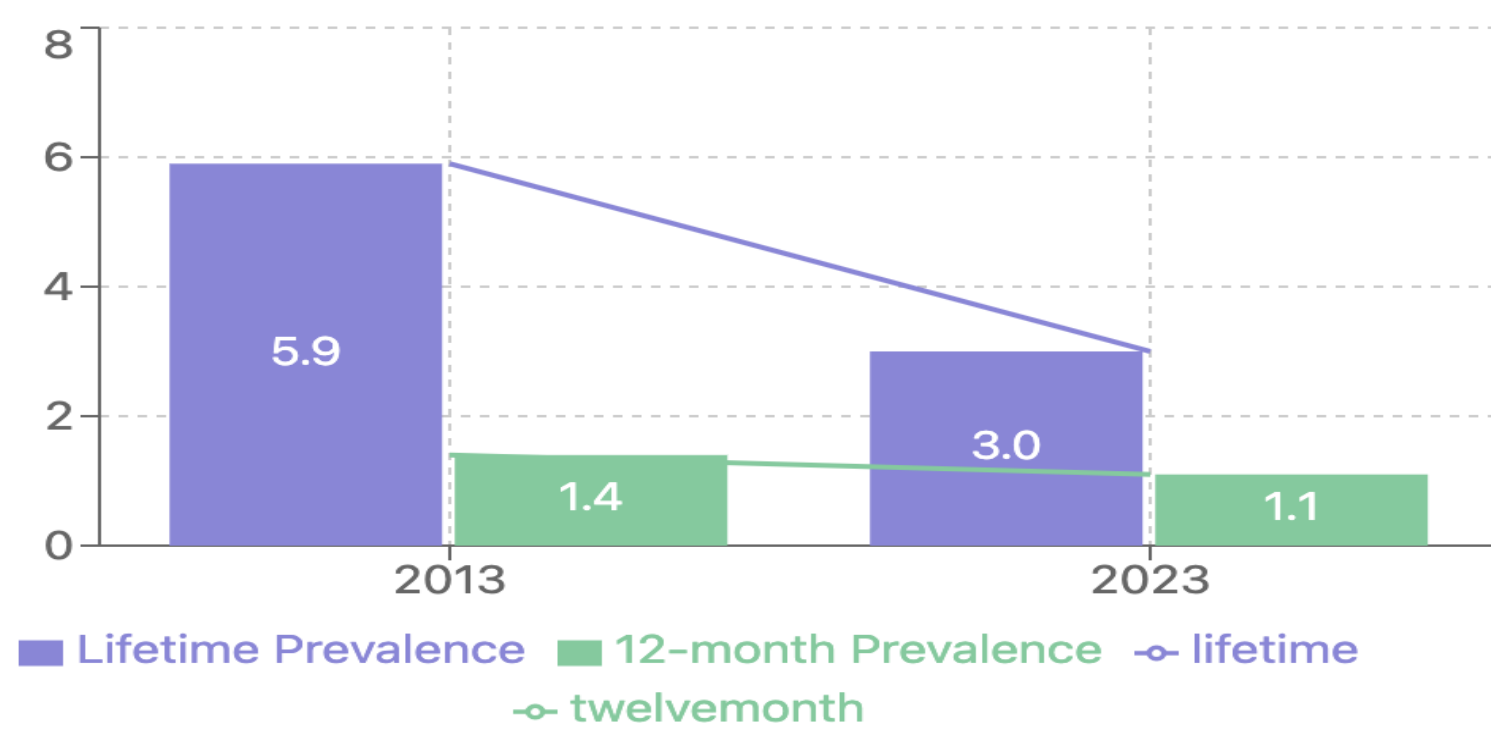
- **Specific PE Types (Lifetime Prevalence)**

  - Hallucinations: ↓ 5.5% (2013) to 2.6% (2023)
  - Delusions: ↓ 0.9% (2013) to 0.7% (2023)
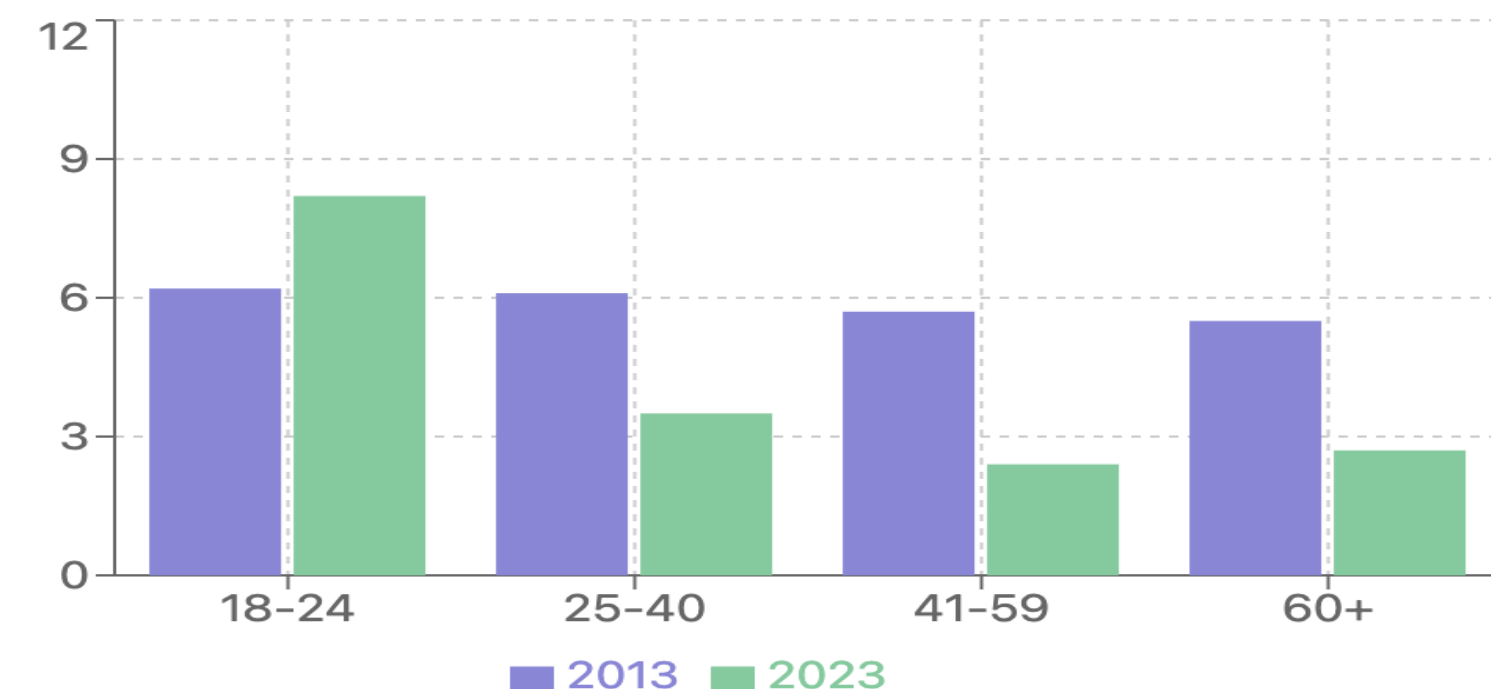
- **High-Prevalence Populations (2023)**

  - Age: Young adults (18-24) highest at 8.2%
  - Region: Bangkok (7.5%), Northeast (6.5%)
  - Gender: Men higher than women
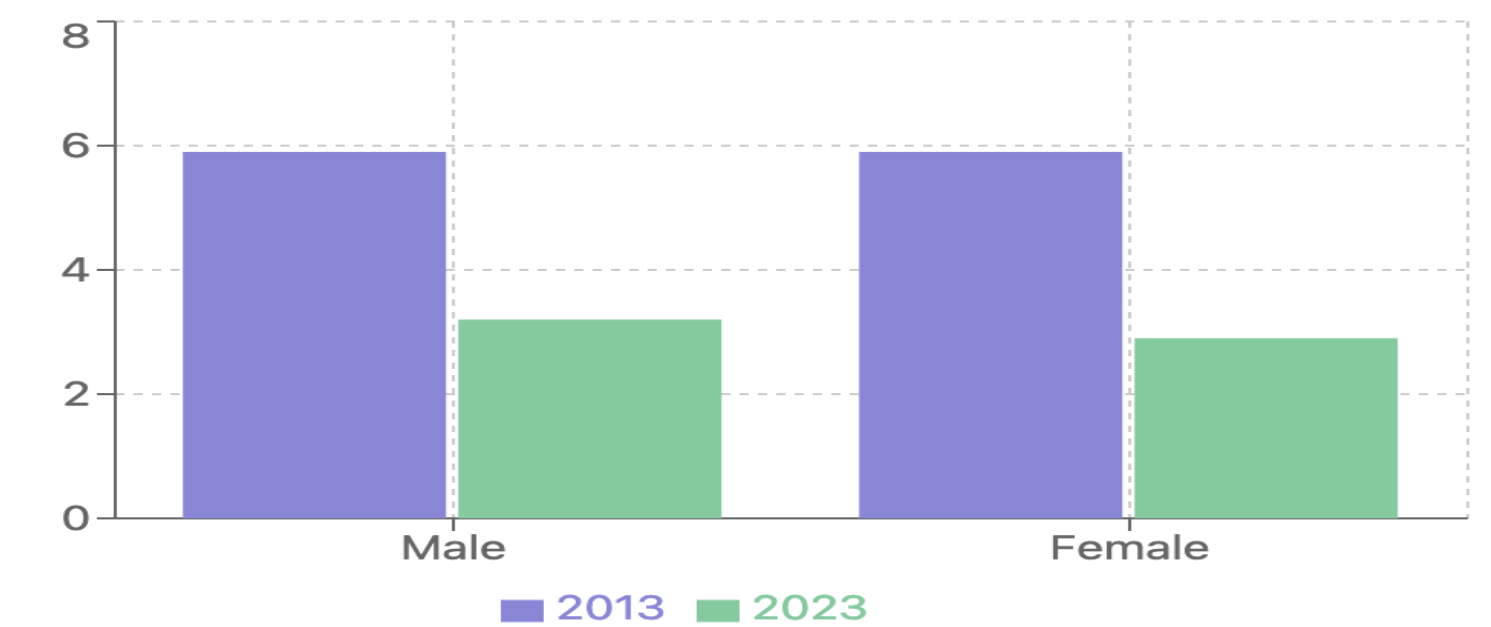 - Employment: Higher among unemployed individuals

Regional Comparison (2013 vs 2023)

Age Group Comparison (2013 vs 2023)

Gender Comparison (2013 vs 2023)

Conclusions:

1. The 2023 data reveals significant shifts in psychosis epidemiology in Thailand:

- Overall lifetime PE prevalence decreased to 3.0% from 2013
- Young adults (18-24) now show highest prevalence at 8.2%
- Men report higher PE than women
- Bangkok and the Northeast regions exhibit an elevated prevalence of PE

2. These findings underscore the need for targeted mental health services, particularly in urban areas.

3. The planned Early Intervention service at SCIP in Bangkok represents a crucial step towards addressing these challenges, potentially serving as a model for future nationwide initiatives in early psychosis intervention and prevention.