Mental and Behavioral Health during COVID-19

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GMHLa: Where We Work

- Bangladesh
- Colombia
- Uganda
- Haiti
- Lebanon
- Nepal
- Jordan
- Kenya
- Ethiopia
- Tanzania
- India
- U.S.A.
December 2019: an outbreak of a novel coronavirus pneumonia occurred in Wuhan, China

June 2020: 8,162,276 cases globally- 441,668 deaths
  • US 2,137,716 cases-116,962 deaths
COVID-19: Unprecedented Effect on Mental Health Systems Around the World

- Speed and extend of its impact + unavailable inoculation and treatment

- High levels of distress around:
  - Risk and impact of infection (self, loved ones)
  - Measures for prevention of infection (business, agency and school closures; social distancing/quarantine/isolation) and
  - Immediate and long term impact of infection on economy, education, and livelihood
Impact of COVID-19 on Mental Health

- Neurobiological effect of SARS-COV-2:
  - Inflammation (“cytokine storm”) and respiratory symptoms can increase risk for depression, anxiety, suicidality (Majd et al, 2020)

- Effects of medical procedures on mental health:
  - In a British prospective study of 5,000 in ICU, 46% of patients developed anxiety, 40% depression and 22% PTSD symptoms within a year of their discharge from the ICU (Hatch et al, 2018). Similar first reports from Mt Sinai NYC.
Impact of COVID-19 on Mental Health

- Losses: of loved ones, resources, parental employment and livelihood
  - Loved ones die alone at the hospital, no rituals and communal support
  - Loss of resources, family income and daily stressors have a large impact on ability to adapt to adversity (Rasmussen et al, 2010)

- Social Distancing, isolation, confinement during severe adversity
Impact of COVID-19 on Mental Health

Percent of Adults Who Say Worry or Stress Related to the Coronavirus Has Had a Negative Impact on Their Mental Health, Based on Sheltering-in-Place Status

- **Sheltering-in-place**
  - Major negative impact: 21%
  - Minor negative impact: 27%
  - Total: 47%

- **Not sheltering-in-place**
  - Major negative impact: 13%
  - Minor negative impact: 24%
  - Total: 37%

*NOTES: *Indicates a statistically significant difference between those sheltering-in-place and those not sheltering-in-place at the p<0.05 level. Distribution may not sum to total due to rounding.

Impact of COVID-19 on Mental Health

- Increase in domestic violence/abuse
- Increased rates of child abuse, neglect, and exploitation during the Ebola outbreak in west Africa from 2014 to 2016 (Lee, J, 2020)

The Shadow Pandemic: Violence Against Women and Girls and COVID-19

Globally, 243 million women and girls aged 15-49 have been subjected to sexual and/or physical violence perpetrated by an intimate partner in the previous 12 months.

The number is likely to INCREASE as security, health, and money worries heighten tensions and strains are accentuated by cramped and confined living conditions.

Emerging data shows that since the outbreak of COVID-19, violence against women and girls (VAWG), and particularly domestic violence, has INTENSIFIED.

- In France, reports of domestic violence have increased by 50% since the lockdown on March 17.
- In Cyprus and Singapore, helplines have registered an increase in calls of 30% and 33%, respectively.
- Increased cases of domestic violence and demand for emergency shelter have also been reported in Canada, Germany, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States.
Impact of COVID-19 on Mental Health of Children

- Disturbance of schooling, daily routines, physical activities
  - Schools have been suspended in 188 countries
  - UNESCO: 90% of enrolled learners (1·5 billion young people) are now out of education
  - When out of school children are physically less active, have more screen time, irregular sleep patterns, and poorer diets, resulting in weight gain and a loss of cardiorespiratory fitness (Lee, J. 2020)

- Deterioration of parental mental health
  - When mother is depressed, child and adolescent’s internalizing and externalizing problems increase (Weissman, et al, 2006)
Impact of COVID-19 on mental health of children

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Mean Point Prevalence Estimates: Mental health disorders in conflict settings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mental Health Disorders</th>
<th>Humanitarian setting</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Severe disorders (schizophrenia/psychosis, bipolar, severe depression, severe anxiety</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(including severe PTSD)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate mental disorder (moderate forms of depression and anxiety, including moderate</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PTSD)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mild mental disorder (mild forms of depression and anxiety, including mild PTSD)</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>22.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Disruptions in normal functioning

- Chronic 5-30%
- Delayed 0-15%?
- Recovery 15-25%
- Resilience 35-65%

COVID-19: Unprecedented Effect on Mental Health Systems Around the World

- Need to transfer whole mental health tools, strategies, and health service networks, from in-person to online or mobile platforms

- For the first time during a disaster, mental health has been explicitly identified as a priority
MANAGEMENT OF THE MENTAL HEALTH EFFECTS OF COVID-19
mhGAP (WHO/UNHCR 2015)

- Basic evidence-based interventions for the identification and management of mental disorders in humanitarian settings

- Can be delivered by non-specialized health workers

- UNHCR scaling up in refugee settings
Mental healthcare by mental health specialists (psychiatric, nurses, psychologists, psychiatrists, etc.)

Basic mental healthcare by primary healthcare doctors
Basic emotional and practical support by community workers

Activating social networks
Communal traditional supports
Supportive age-friendly spaces

Advocacy for basic services that are safe, socially appropriate and protect dignity

Social considerations in basic services and security

Strengthening community and family supports

Focused non-specialised supports

Specialised services
MHPSS response to the COVID-19 outbreak in Lebanon-V1.0

- Developed as part of the national response to the COVID-19 outbreak
- Aims at addressing the MHPSS aspects of the COVID-19 outbreak in Lebanon for all persons living in the country including Palestinian refugees and Syrians displaced using an integrated approach
- Developed by the MOPH-National Mental Health Programme with WHO and UNICEF, in line with the IASC Briefing note on addressing mental health and psychosocial aspects of COVID-19 Outbreak- version 1.0 and the local needs, health system and national mental health strategy

This is a dynamic document subject to revisions based on arising needs.
Goals

I. Promote mental health and mitigate COVID-19 related stressors including stigma and discrimination against persons affected and health workers

II. Provide mental health support to the persons in quarantine in the hospital or at home and their families

III. Support the mental health of health workers and first responders in the response

IV. Ensure continuity of mental health care for persons using mental health services in line with IPC guidelines
Human Rights Protection Frame

Equality

Equity
Communities of color carry the burden of essential work and COVID-19

- Context is crucial in the disparities dialogue: in NYC, Black and Hispanic residents are 2x more likely to die by COVID-19 than their White & Asian counterparts
  - 6-fold increase in the rate of death for African Americans (Yancy, 2020)

Data are derived from the Bureau of Communicable Disease Surveillance Systems (April 6, 2020)


Human Rights Protection Frame

Equality

Equity
Behavioral Health Continuum of Care Model
For Everyone

- When referring to people with COVID-19, do not attach the disease to any particular ethnicity or nationality.

- Do not refer to people with the disease as “COVID-19 cases/victims/families” or “the diseased” instead:
  - “People who have COVID-19/are being treated/recovering from COVID-19”

- Find opportunities to amplify positive and hopeful stories of people who experienced COVID-19.

- Honor carers and healthcare workers in your community.
Stress Due to COVID-19 (WHO, 2020)

When we are experiencing difficult and challenging times (like COVID) it is normal to feel:

• worried about loved ones, especially if they are at risk of illness
• worried about personal health and safety
• concerned about disruption of health care services
• socially isolated or sometimes lonely, especially when living alone
• bored, tired, or lacking energy and productivity
• uncertain about the future and unable to concentrate on make plans
**Physical**

- Headaches, tremors in hands, increased heart rate
- Muscular pains/aches
- Cold sweating
- Tiredness, sleep disturbance, decreased appetite
- Gastrointestinal problems
- Persistent pain without any apparent cause, or pain above the level of what you may expect from an injury

**Psychological**

- Impaired concentration and decision-making, anxiety, recurrent thoughts or memories
- Forgetfulness
- Irritability
- Worry, sadness or crying, loss of pleasure from usual activities
- Tearfulness, anger
- Guilt/survivor shame

**Social**

- Social withdrawal
- Inability to perform day-to-day tasks
- Increased conflict with family or community members
- Inability to perform well at work/difficulties in school
- Misuse of medicines or substances (e.g. smoking, alcohol, cannabis, etc.)
- Lack of interest in usual activities
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Take breaks from the news</th>
<th>Make time to unwind</th>
<th>Set goals and priorities</th>
<th>Take care of your body</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Connect with others</td>
<td>Focus on the facts</td>
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National Institute of Mental Health, June 2020
For Parents

Children may respond to stress in different ways such as being more clingy, anxious, withdrawing, angry or agitated, bedwetting etc.

Respond to your child’s reactions in a supportive way, listen to their concerns and give them extra love and attention.

Children need adults’ love and attention during difficult times. Give them extra time and attention.

Remember to listen to your children, speak kindly and reassure them.

If possible, make opportunities for the child to play and relax.

Try and keep children close to their parents and family and avoid separating children and their caregivers to the extent possible. If separation occurs (e.g. hospitalization) ensure regular contact (e.g. via phone) and re-assurance.

Keep to regular routines and schedules as much as possible, or help create new ones in a new environment, including school/learning as well as time for safely playing and relaxing.

Provide facts about what has happened, explain what is going on now and give them clear information about how to reduce their risk of being infected by the disease in words that they can understand depending on their age.

This also includes providing information about what could happen in a re-assuring way (e.g. a family member and/or the child may start not feeling well and may have to go to the hospital for some time so doctors can help them feel better).

Evidence-based strategies to buffer the effects of adversity in children

- Increase connection and communication skills (write letters to friends, relatives)
- Establish daily routines and adequate sleep
- Reduce unnecessary information about the disaster
- Increase physical activity (ask the kid to dance for you, put together a show/play)
- Mindfulness/Relaxation
- Religion/Spirituality
Evidence-based strategies to buffer the effects of adversity in children

- Improving caregiver mental health
- Increasing positive reinforcement levels at home
- De-escalate conflicts that can erupt out of control
- Identify other adults who can step in and assist
- Create a frame to understand impact of stress ("fight or flight" leading to irritability)
My Hero is You

- Illustrated book to explain COVID-19 to children aged 5-11
- 73 languages (and counting)
- Audio and videos
For Caregivers of Older Adults

- Facilitate ways to maintain social connections.
- Encourage them to stay active, maintain mobility and reduce boredom.
- Find ways where they can connect with others (e.g. Facetime with grandchildren).
- Curate a list of reliable media sources and write them down.
For Mental Health Providers

- Self-care (e.g. resting, taking breaks as needed, taking time away from service provision).
- Prepare back-up plans with your colleagues for crisis management (e.g. alternate therapeutic arrangements).
- Set up peer supports & supervision.
- Seek out professional help as needed.
New York State
COVID-19 EMOTIONAL SUPPORT HELPLINE

It's okay to admit when things feel hard. We're here to listen.

1-844-863-9314
8 AM - 10 PM, 7 days a week
For Individuals/Patients Receiving Mental Health Services

- As soon as possible, work with your mental health provider on:
  - Developing a coping plan (with practical skills – walking outside, connecting with others) for everyday stressors.
  - Relapse prevention drill.
  - Identify options if your routine services (pharmacy, clinic visits etc) are disrupted.

- Seek positive peer support
- Limit alcohol/substance use
“Being Prepared”
(Relapse Drill— D. Miklowitz)

- What will tell you that you are developing symptoms of (mental health condition)

- A plan of action
  - What would I do to prevent a full-blown depressive episode?
  - What would I ask my friends or family to do for me?
  - What would I ask my friends or family to say to me?
  - Contact therapeutic team
  - Arrange medication adjustments
  - Identify people who can help (e.g. childcare, transportation, hygiene)
Regular daily routines/sleep
For more severe cases: CBT-I
Mindfulness

Your body is present.  

Is your mind?

Past  

Present  

Future

Doug Neill
WHO Tools available on line

2016:
- Group IPT Manual launched by the WHO, Geneva, October 11th, World Mental Health Day
  *Verdeli, Clougherty and Weissman.

2017:
- IPC for Primary Care, WHO MENA Region
  *Weissman, Verdeli and Khalid Saeed.
Interpersonal Psychotherapy for depression

- Grief (of loved ones, health care workers losses of patients)
- Disputes (emphasis on emotion regulation and de-escalation)
- Role transitions (loss of jobs, homes, etc)
- Loneliness/social isolation
Positive Unintended Consequences of the Pandemic on Mental Health Systems Reform

- Given climate change, epidemics, and global increases in forcible displacement, violence, and state fragility:
  - It is important to have flexible and versatile systems of mental health care
  - Capacity for remote care and monitoring
  - Community-based, where community gate-keepers (community leaders, lay health workers, and religious leaders, teachers, persons with lived experience, etc.) play a central role

- There are discussions in families and communities about mental health (demand for information, resources, offers for volunteering)
Emotional Flexibility
(Bonanno et al, 2011)
1347-1351 BC
THANK YOU
New York State
Office of Mental Health
COVID-19 Hotline:
Resources & Referrals
COVID-19 Information/Updates

- NYS DOH Coronavirus Hotline: 1-888-364-3065
- NYS Coronavirus response updates: https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home
- CDC, What to do if you think you have been exposed to COVID-19: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html
- NYC Thrive/Mayor’s Office: Mental Health Support New Yorkers Can Access While Staying Home: https://thrivenyc.cityofnewyork.us/mental_health_support_while_home
Crisis Situations

- Suicide Prevention Lifeline:
  - 1-800-273-TALK (8255) for English
  - 1-888-628-9454 for Spanish
- National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-7233
- NYS Coalition Against Domestic Violence: 1-800-942-6906
- Child Abuse Hotline: 800-342-3720
- SAMHSA’s Disaster Distress Helpline: 1-800-985-5990 (English/Spanish); TTY: 1-800-846-8517
- Veterans metal health/suicide hotline: 1-800-273-8255, or text 838-25
Accessing Treatment

- Identifying Supports:
  - Aunt Bertha ([www.auntbertha.com](http://www.auntbertha.com)) allows you to locate supports by zip code.

Search for **free or reduced cost** services like medical care, food, job training, and more.

Zip: 90210  
Search
COVID-19 Volunteerings

• Health care workers: https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/get-involved-how-you-can-help

• General Public, NYC: https://www.newyorkcares.org/projects/support-covid-19-relief-efforts

• General Public, NYS: https://www.volunteernewyork.org/

• Blood Donation site locator: https://donate.nybc.org/donor/schedules/zip
Peer Support

- Veterans Peer Support Call - DAILY at 1p.m. EST: 1-800-767-1750 x99873
- NAMI-NYS helpline: 518-248-7634
- Mental Health Empowerment Project warm line for people with mental illness: 1-800-643-7462
Special Populations

Seniors/Elderly:

- **Senior service (senior centers, meals on wheels, etc) locator for NYC:** [https://www1.nyc.gov/site/dfta/services/find-help.page](https://www1.nyc.gov/site/dfta/services/find-help.page)
- **NYC Grocery Delivery for Elderly, Disabled:** [https://www.invisiblehandsdeliver.com/about-us](https://www.invisiblehandsdeliver.com/about-us)
- **County Offices for the Aging locator (scroll down for filters):** [https://aging.ny.gov/local-offices](https://aging.ny.gov/local-offices)
- **NY Connects, statewide social services finder:** [https://www.nyconnects.ny.gov/welcome](https://www.nyconnects.ny.gov/welcome)
- **US Administration on Aging Eldercare Locator:** [https://eldercare.acl.gov/Public/Index.aspx](https://eldercare.acl.gov/Public/Index.aspx) or 1-800-677-1116
Special Populations

- Veterans: VA facility locator: VA locator
  o Veterans mental health/suicide hotline: 1-800-273-8255, or text 838-25

- First Responders/Essential Workers:
  o CDC Self-care Guidance: https://emergency.cdc.gov/coping/responders.asp
Self-Care/Coping Resources

Relaxation/Self-Care Resources

**Meditation:**
- Headspace is offering free meditations on their website and on their app
- The Insight Timer app has free guided meditations
- NYAPRS will offer a daily meditation at 8am M-F on YouTube, access via their site: https://www.nyaprs.org/

**Online Yoga:**
- Yoga with Adriene on Youtube - always free online
- YogaWorks - free online classes during this time

**Online Exercise:**
- Les Mills Free Workouts - during this time
- Pamela Reif on Youtube - always free
- Popsugar Fitness - always free
- Fitness Blender – selection of free workouts
- Planet Fitness free live workout sessions - during this time