

Health workforce support needs in the light of Covid crisis (example from Serbia)

Marija Jevtic^{1,2,4}, Maja Tobi Strizović^{3,4}, Tija Despotović^{4,5}, Vilma Jovičić⁴

¹ University of Novi Sad, Faculty of Medicine

² Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB), Research centre on Environmental and Occupational Health, School of Public Health

³ANIMA private praxis Novi Sad, ⁴GASi Belgrade, ⁵PSIHA private praxis Belgrade



- ❑ The Covid pandemic revealed all the weaknesses of health systems.
- ❑ Lack of capacity to accommodate patients and lack of appropriate equipment, inadequate organization of treating non-covid patients, and numerous challenges along with a large number of deaths have affected all health professionals.
- ❑ Lots of these challenges were and are monitored and measurable, and measures have been and are being taken according to possibilities.
- ❑ However, significant impacts and changes are changing health professionals personally and professionally, though still not wholly visible and impossible to assess the crisis consequences on health professionals' mental health.

Challenge:

Although a research on the impact of the pandemic on the mental health of the population, patients, and health professionals has already been made, it appears that there are neither enough actions nor the possibility to take action to support health workers.



- ❑ There are real extraordinary circumstances in planning shifts, engagement, and the need to provide time for physical recovery and family time after difficult shifts in the "red zones", in order to temporarily suppress the job-related thoughts.
- ❑ It is important to further explore the ways to overcome the noticed resilience, to exchange experiences in providing support to health professionals to ensure the strengthening of human resources capacity and health systems in general.



AIM:

The paper aims to present an example of the activities taken by the Group Analytic Society Belgrade (GASi Belgrade) in the Covid pandemic emergency circumstances.



ACTIVITIES:

- ❑ Wishing to support health professionals and associates, and student volunteers, GASi Belgrade has organized and created online groups.
- ❑ The setting is defined, participation in the group is open and voluntary, in compliance with confidentiality and non-disclosure principles.
- ❑ The goal of the support group to health professionals is to exchange experiences, feelings, and mutual support in daily work. Online groups thus become a space for connection, understanding and common reflection, therefore influencing the capacity building for health professionals' resilience in the pandemic crisis conditions.

- ❑ Group leaders are experienced group analysts, members of GASi Belgrade.
- ❑ The paper aims to present the challenges and aggravating circumstances in forming groups.
- ❑ The gap between the present need for support and the difficulties to form groups is noticed.
- ❑ The aggravating circumstances to form an online group can be seen as strong resistance in accepting the offered help, i.e. negating the need for support, while experience with health professionals individually indicates a feeling of helplessness and hopelessness, and the impossibility of any help (which can be a projection of the situation in "severely affected" health systems).

ADDRESSING MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES OF COVID WARRIORS
Handling Distress of HealthCare Workers in Quarantine

- 🔗 Providing adequate and accurate information of COVID-19
- 📦 Ensure access to adequate personal supplies
- 👥 Help combating boredom & frustration by ensuring contact with friends & family
- 🗨️ A designated staff member may keep in regular touch with the person in quarantine
- 👤 One staff member to be designated to keep in contact with family of the quarantined to ensure they are supported & supplied with essentials

- ❑ The pandemic crisis has created the need for a complex approach and support to the most valuable part of the health system, human resources, whether in a covid or non-covid system, so health systems could achieve sustainability and overcome the current crisis.

NEW CHALLENGES IN MENTAL HEALTH

The health workforce needs greater attention and support. COVID-19 has increased stress and health risks of health workers. Care4Carers must become a health policy priority.

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Contact e-mail: marija.jevtic@uns.ac.rs