IIMHL & IIDL Leadership Briefing XXXV

Health & wellbeing for frontline mental health and addiction workers in the COVID-19 environment

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9 October 2020

"From September 2020, every member of the NHS should have a health and wellbeing conversation and develop a personalised plan."[1]

"He aha te mea nui o te ao. He tāngata, he tāngata, he tāngata."

"What is the greatest thing?
What is the most important thing in this world?
I will say
The people! The people! The people!"[2]

Introduction

This report updates the April 2020 report - a speedy review of how IIMHL countries are supporting staff wellbeing in the COVID-19 environment. Most resources cited here are from August 2020. Each link contains lists of relevant resources.

The focus is on Government information and national health agencies and mental health/addiction agencies. The aim is to share information quickly across countries.

WHO

World Mental Health Day - World Mental Health Day: an opportunity to kick-start a massive scale-up in investment in mental health
27th August 2020

World Mental Health Day is an opportunity for the world to come together and begin redressing the historic neglect of mental health," said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization. "We are already seeing the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on people's mental well-being, and this is just the beginning. Unless we make serious commitments to scale up investment in mental health right now, the health, social and economic consequences will be far-reaching.

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[1] https://www.england.nhs.uk/ournhspeople/online-version/lfaop/support-during-covid/
[2] https://www.tepou.co.nz/news/he-aha-te-mea-nui-o-te-ao-he-tangata-he-tangata-he-tangata/691

https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/27-08-2020-world-mental-health-day-an-opportunity-to-kick-start-a-massive-scale-up-in-investment-in-mental-health

Basic Psychosocial Skills: A Guide for COVID-19 Responders
1st June 2020

The WHO Guide is intended for health and social workers; emergency responders; people working in food stores, public transport, funeral parlours and pharmacies; employers and managers; and people who are providing support to vulnerable family members or members of their community.

The illustrated chapters provide practical advice for taking care of one's own mental well-being, communicating with empathy, and helping people suffering from stress or severe distress. Case studies and tips to remember are included throughout.

https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2020-05/Basic%20Psychosocial%20Skills-%20A%20Guide%20for%20COVID-19%20Responders.pdf

Aotearoa/New Zealand

Ministry of Health: COVID-19: Mental health and wellbeing resources - Information and tools to support your mental wellbeing during the COVID-19 response
2nd September 2020

The Ministry of Health in New Zealand has reported how COVID-19 has had a significant impact on how we interact with others, go about our lives, our work, study and many other aspects of our lives. The Ministry have stated that a combination of stress and uncertainty can have significant and wide-reaching impacts on the mental wellbeing of people in New Zealand.

This new resource aims to amplify the message that it is normal to not feel all right all the time – it's understandable to feel sad, distressed, worried, confused, anxious or angry during this crisis. The resource provides tools and ideas for new or additional ways to help you feel mentally well and get through. This page connects you with the tools that are available to support your own and others' mental wellbeing, and places you can get help from when you need it.

This information is also useful for health providers. On this page:

- Supporting your own mental wellbeing
- Supporting others' mental wellbeing
- If you need someone to talk to
- If you're feeling suicidal
- If you're concerned about someone's safety

https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-health-advice-public/covid-19-mental-health-and-wellbeing-resources

Health Safety & Quality Commission: Wellbeing
14th August 2020

There are a wide range of COVID-19 related resources available to support the personal and professional wellbeing of health care workers and their whānau (family). They are categorised under the headings below.

- Your own mental health and wellbeing
- Mental health and addiction workers' mental health and wellbeing
- Mental health and wellbeing international perspectives
- Mental health and wellbeing for Māori
- Mental health and wellbeing for Pacific peoples

https://www.hqsc.govt.nz/our-programmes/other-topics/covid-19-resource-hub/wellbei ng/

Australia

Australian Government: Department of Health – Mental Health for the workforce COVID-19
14th August 2020

Health workers at the centre of the COVID-19 pandemic are critical in the fight against the virus. Measures like social distancing and isolation are helping to slow its spread. But health workers still face extreme pressure from the increased demand on the health care system.

Long and irregular hours and heavy workloads can increase stress and cause mental health issues, including burnout. The Australian Department of Health has been working to ensure that managers and supervisors should be sensitive to the issues that might affect their employees.

Looking after yourself, your mental health and wellbeing is critical in these tough times.

- Why mental health is important for health workers
- Get urgent help
- How health workers might be feeling
- Keeping mentally healthy
- Support contacts
- Staying informed
- Resources
- Mental health for patients and carers

https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-the-health-and-aged-care-sector/mental-health-for-the-health-workforce-during-covid-19

England

NHS: Online version of the People Plan for 2020/2021
6th August 2020

NHS England recently published its People Plan. It sets out how now and in the future the NHS will need more people, working differently, this will include:

- more people in training and education, and being recruited to ensure that our services are appropriately staffed
- working differently embracing new ways of working in teams, across organisations and sectors, and supported by technology
- working in a compassionate and inclusive culture building on the motivation at the heart of our NHS to look after and value our people, create a sense of belonging and promote a more inclusive service and workplace so that our people will want to stay.

https://www.england.nhs.uk/ournhspeople/online-version/introduction/

NHS: Support during COVID-19 so far
2020

Through the COVID-19 response to date, individuals and teams have done a huge amount to support each other, including regular team check-ins, and making space available for colleagues to rest and recuperate. The links below provide some examples of the work being done within the NHS on staff wellbeing:

We are safe and healthy
We invest in our physical and mental health and wellbeing
We work flexibly

Many other resources are available on this website. It also sets out the NHS England commitement thatL "From September 2020, every member of the NHS should have a health and wellbeing conversation and develop a personalised plan".
Nationally, NHS England and NHS Improvement have built on this with an offer made to all NHS staff on the NHS People website with:

- a dedicated health and care staff support service including confidential support via phone and text message
- specialist bereavement support
- free access to mental health and wellbeing apps
- guidance for key workers on how to have difficult conversations with their children
- group and one-to-one support, including specialist services to support our black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) colleagues

- mental health resources and support, including for people affected by suicide
- a series of webinars providing a forum for support and conversation with experts.

https://www.england.nhs.uk/ournhspeople/online-version/lfaop/support-during-covid/

Kings Health Partners: COVID-19 Staff Health and Wellbeing
2020

The link below provides a range of staff health and wellbeing resources from trusted national sources that have been developed locally, nationally or internationally and this page will be updated regularly to ensure that you can access timely, accurate and relevant resources all in one place. The list of resources below will provide useful guidance and support in the following areas:

- Building individual and team resilience
- Managing distress
- Developing coping and adjustment skills
- Providing access to peer support networks and stress management tools.

https://www.kingshealthpartners.org/our-work/mind-and-body/staff-health-and-wellbeing

Canada

Government of Canada: Mental health and COVID-19 for public servants: Protect your mental health
27th August 2020

The Govt. Of Canada has acknowledged that the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak and the necessary public health measures to contain its spread are creating stress for people and communities across Canada, including federal public servants and their families.

This webpage has a host of resources for staff.

- Mental health and wellness during COVID-19
- Mental health in the workplace
- Coping with stress
- Self-care and resilience
- Financial well-being
- Additional resources

It also has additional resources from other key national mental health and addiction agencies.

https://www.canada.ca/en/government/publicservice/covid-19/protect-mental-health.html

Ireland

Health Service Executive: Minding your mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic
29th June 2020

The HSE in Ireland has produced this guide to staff health and wellbeing during COVID-19

https://www2.hse.ie/wellbeing/mental-health/covid-19/minding-your-mental-health-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak.html

Guidance for staff

Guidance for health care workers in self-isolation
Guidance for healthcare professionals
Workplace Health and Wellbeing Unit:
- a free staff counselling service is available through the Employee Assistance Programme
- List of local Occupational Health office and contact details
- for Health and Safety advice and information phone **1850 520 420**

Free online programmes

Online mental health service SilverCloud Health is giving free access to all HSE staff to four self-directed online programmes.

The mental health programmes available are:

- Dealing with stress
- Building resilience
- Improving your sleep
- Space from COVID-19

https://hse.silvercloudhealth.com/onboard/hsestaff/programs/?link=header_menu

Scotland

Scottish Government: More mental health support for health and social care staff
20th July 2020

All health and social care workers in Scotland will now have access to mental health support 24 hours a day, seven days a week through a new national helpline.
The Scottish Government is funding the wellbeing helpline for those who need further psychological support, including in light of the coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis.

This follows the success of the National Wellbeing Hub https://www.promis.scot/ for staff launched in May.

Trained practitioners at NHS 24 will offer callers a compassionate and empathic listening service based on the principles of psychological first aid, as well as advice, signposting and onward referral to local services if required.

https://www.gov.scot/news/more-mental-health-support-for-health-and-social-care-staff/

US

SAMHSA: COVID-19
August 2020

SAMHSA is providing the following guidance and resources to assist individuals, providers, communities, and states across the country. SAMHSA stands ready to assist in any manner possible.

https://www.samhsa.gov/coronavirus

Center for Disease Control (CDC): Coping with stress
1st July 2020

Healthcare Personnel and First Responders: How to Cope with Stress and Build Resilience During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Providing care to others during the COVID-19 pandemic can lead to stress, anxiety, fear, and other strong emotions. How one cope's with these emotions can affect their well-being, the care they give to others while doing their job, and the well-being of the people they care about outside of work.

The CDC has provided helpful advice about health and wellbeing and coping with the stress that can arise as a result of COVID-19.

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/mental-health-healthcare.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fcommunity%2Fmental-health-healthcare.html