Protecting Mental Health and Promoting Recovery in COVID-19 & Beyond

Prepared for the
National Advisory Council National Health Service Corps

Joshua Morganstein, M.D.
Captain, U.S. Public Health Service
Chair, Disaster Committee, American Psychiatric Association
Associate Professor / Assistant Chair, Department of Psychiatry
Assistant Director, Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress
School of Medicine, Uniformed Services University
Disclaimer

The ideas, attitudes, and opinions expressed herein are my own and do not necessarily reflect those of the Uniformed Services University, the U.S. Public Health Service, the Department of Defense, or other branches of the U.S. government. I am not endorsing any of the entities or resources mentioned in this presentation and have no relevant disclosures or conflicts of interest to report.
In a disaster, the size of the psychological “footprint” greatly exceeds the size of the medical “footprint.”

Psychological & Behavioral Responses to Pandemics & Disasters

- Sleep difficulties
- Decreased Sense of Safety
- Physical (Somatic) Symptoms
- Irritability, Anger
- Distraction, Isolation

- Depression
- PTSD
- Anxiety
- Complex Grief

- Alcohol, Tobacco, Rx meds
- Family Distress
- Interpersonal Conflict/Violence
- Disrupted Work/Life Balance
- Restricted Activities/Travel

### Stress Continuum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>READY</th>
<th>REACTING</th>
<th>INJURED</th>
<th>ILL</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| **DEFINITION** | • Adaptive coping  
• Effective functioning  
• Well-being | • Mild and transient distress or loss of function | • More severe and persistent distress or loss of function | • Clinical mental disorders  
• Unhealed stress injuries |
| **FEATURES** | • In control  
• Calm and steady  
• Getting the job done  
• Playing  
• Sense of humor  
• Sleeping enough  
• Ethical and moral behavior | • Anxious  
• Irritable, angry  
• Worrying  
• Cutting corners  
• Poor sleep  
• Poor mental focus  
• Social isolation  
• Too loud and hyperactive | • Trauma  
• Fatigue  
• Grief  
• Moral injury  
• Loss of control  
• Can’t sleep  
• Panic or rage  
• Apathy  
• Shame or guilt  
• Symptoms persist > 60 days after return from deployment | |

**Self Help**  
**Leadership/Organizational Support**  
**Peer Support**  
**Screening/Referral**

Who is at Risk?

**PRE-EVENT**
- Socioeconomic Status
- Social Support
- Training Status
- Work Environment
- Underlying Health Conditions
- Help-Seeking Behaviors

**EVENT**
- Duration & Severity of Exposure
- Psychological Identification
- Illness
- Bereavement
- Moral Injury

**RECOVERY**
- Social Support Loss
- Low Organizational Support
- Lack of Rest & Recovery
- Job Loss
- Financial Hardship
- Housing Instability

**PRE**

**DISASTER**

**POST**


Look for strengths/resilience in everyone…

Substance Use, Family Conflict, Social Isolation

Time w/ Family, Connect w/ Neighbors, Self-Reliance

HOME BOUND DURING COVID-19
Healthcare Worker Sustainment

**ORGANIZATIONS**
- Training
- Equipment
- Education
- Policies
- Procedures
- Resources

**INDIVIDUALS**
- Self-care
- Take Breaks
- Peer Buddies
- Stay Connected
- Self Check-ins
- Honor Service
- Speak Up

**LEADERS**
- Presence
- Communication
- Encouragement
- Be an example
- Normalizing
- Hope/optimism
- Grief

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Resources

https://www.acponline.org/practice-resources/physician-well-being-and-professional-fulfillment/im-emotional-support-hub

I.M. Emotional Support Hub

It’s common right now to feel overwhelmed, stressed, or depressed. Taking care of ourselves and encouraging others to practice self-care sustains our ability to care for those in need.

Protect your health and well-being by connecting with easily-accessible peer support through the Physician Support Line (P), and affordable, confidential counseling is available through The Emotional PPE Project (P) and The Therapy Aid Coalition (P).

If you or someone you know is in crisis, help is available 24/7. Text 741741 or call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-8255) or Disaster Distress Hotline (1-800-985-5990).

TRAINING SLIDES & MATERIALS:
https://www.gnyha.org/program/hero-ny/

HEALING, EDUCATION, RESILIENCE & OPPORTUNITY FOR NEW YORK’S FRONTLINE WORKERS


https://heroeshealth.unc.edu/
THANK YOU