

# *Mental health and issues of psychiatric problems in patients with covid-19* \_\_\_\_\_

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## **Abstract**

### *Introduction*

Covid 19, a multisystem disease first reported in the state of China in December 2019, would soon be knocking on the doors of Europe. The main focus was the damage that SARS-COVID 2 brought to all systems and organs, but few would stop at the impact of this new stressor on the world of human psychology. The disease itself with its unknowns, limited tests, still experimental treatment, isolation and hygienic rules, stigma, job loss as well as the financial burden of the disease, are negative factors that accompany the disease.

### *Purpose*

To assess the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on mental health and the psychiatric sphere in affected patients as well as their families.

### *Methodology*

This is a time study, which examined 30 patients who were diagnosed with COVID 19, in the local administrative unit of Gjirokastra in the period June-September 2020. The obtained data were subjected to statistical processing.

## *Results*

It was found that 23% of patients had anxiety which they reported equally as stress. Insomnia was found in 65% of patients, stigma 30%, fear 58%, irritability 19%.

## *Conclusion*

Mental health is vulnerable to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is imperative the presence of a mental health worker assist patients and their families.

## *Discussion*

This study, in line with other scientific research, has concluded that emotional distress is always associated with adversity and this was also found in COVID-19. There are still differing opinions from the World Health Organization as to whether it should be classified as post-traumatic stress or rather in the spectrum of anxiety disorders and depression.

**Keywords:** mental health, COVID-19, anxiety, depression, PTSD.

The covid19 pandemic has had an impact on the lives of millions of people in the whole world.

Has been seen a deterioration of the mental health of persons who have not previously had problems in this area, as well as a relapse and deterioration of those with previous problems.

Mental health problems have been seen to begin early with the onset of the pandemic but are likely to persist after its onset, as the so-called second wave of the mental health pandemic. (1)

Figures taken from articles and studies conducted in different countries show this evidence: in the US 45% of adults reported stress and anxiety disorders, in Britain 33% of patients had high levels of anxiety. In Italy survivors had a spectrum of post-traumatic stress symptoms, stress (21%), anxiety (20%), depressive symptoms (17%), insomnia (7%). (2), (3).

The main factors that affect mental health problems are:

The direct impact of the disease that in a high percentage is also deadly. Being away from family members, both for the patient and for other family members, we take into account here the traditions and close family ties that are still strong for the Albanian culture. “Bombing” with sad news from the media, especially the exposure of health workers with many patients in serious

health condition, fear of infection, fear of infecting family members, the stigma of prejudice. Disproportionately mental health problems will appear in health workers who are at the forefront of the fight against the pandemic, disease survivors, family members, children who have lost loved ones, who have previously had mental health problems . (4)

Efforts to escape contamination, limiting activities and social interactions as well as the opportunity to contact social services. Lack of adequate provision of food, medicine. Inability to provide access to health care to treat both previous chronic illnesses: mental health as well as other chronic illnesses. The inability to attend places of worship, the ban on social and ceremonial gatherings makes these institutions lose their contribution to the psychological support of attendees. Extending the length of stay at home increases the likelihood that the most vulnerable groups will be victims of violence. In our tradition, family support is provided through the help of neighbors, with whom they have close relations. The lack of social services for the elderly means that in most of them the main source of assistance is the new relatives. In isolation, these broken relationships make these age groups more vulnerable to mental health problems. (5) (6)

Job loss and declining economic income. This has a strong impact especially in countries like ours with low per capita incomes. Economic difficulties are in all areas of the formal, informal and agrarian economy. The economic consequences have not yet been assessed exactly how long the pandemic has not yet ended, but this economic review comes at a time when the demand for expensive therapies is always increasing. (7)

## **Our study**

### *Purpose*

To assess the impact of the COVID 19 Pandemic on mental health and the psychiatric sphere, in patients affected by this disease and their families.

This is a challenging issue, as the main focus of the pandemic has been on the multiorgan damage of SARS COV 2, but few studies and therapeutic and supportive approaches to mental health.

### *Methodology*

This is a time study, which examined 30 patients who were diagnosed with COVID 19, in the district of Gjirokastra in the period June-September 2020.

Patients were subjected to a closed-ended questionnaire, where they were asked to show personal experiences, categorized according to the main manifestos of mental health indicators. The obtained data were subjected to statistical processing.

## *Results*

It was found that 23% of patients had anxiety who reported the same as stress, this complaint was 10% higher in women. Insomnia was observed in 65% of patients. It was noted that this complaint was found not only in those who had previously suffered from insomnia, but also in those who had not previously had this complaint. Glucocorticoid therapy was an aggravating factor, especially when applied at dinner. Insomnia was encountered in an approximate percentage in men and women. About 22% of patients who referred for drowsiness reported having used somnifere medications, which they had not used before.

Stigma 30% At the beginning of the pandemic this was even more evident. The idea that they would be prejudiced as careless was found in most of them 67%, while 45% reported that they had a lot of problems with the stigma of not being labeled as an individual who did not follow the rules of isolation. A smaller percentage had a sense of guilt of infecting colleagues or friends 31 %

Fear 58% and irritation 19%, patients reported that the main contribution to this sensation had the fact of being infected with a disease that has a high mortality rate, unlike seasonal flu. As evidenced is the fear that is accompanied by other indicators, such as anxiety, insomnia, stigma, etc.

## *Conclusion*

Mental health is vulnerable to the COVID pandemic 19. It is necessary to have the assistance of a mental health worker to these patients and their families as well as other support structures. There is talk in international circles about the “wave” after the pandemic, which is dedicated to the consequences on mental health, based on the previous situation compared to natural and humanitarian disasters.

## *Discussion*

This study, in line with other research, has concluded that emotional stress is always associated with adversity and this has also been found in COVID. The WHO still has dilemmas as to whether to classify it as post-traumatic stress or

more in the spectrum of anxiety disorders and depression. However, setting up support structures should be a priority, as mental health is just as important as any element of an individual's health.

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