COVID-19 and Mental Health

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Project ECHO
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Outline

1. Working with Existing Psychiatric Disorders
2. Working with Emerging Psychiatric Disorders
3. Addressing the Mental Health Needs of the General Public
4. New Directions
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Working with Existing Psychiatric Disorders
Psychotic Disorders

- Cognitive deficits
- Injectable medications
- Stigma
  - Drowsiness
  - Involuntary movements
  - Sialorrhea (drooling)

- Paranoia and the Evil World
- Social isolation

Depression and Suicide

- Economic difficulties
- Social isolation
- Access to MH treatments
- Guilt
- Late spring/Early summer
- The “Pulling Together” effect

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Working with Emerging Psychiatric Disorders
Assessment Road Map

Screen

PTSD

Diagnose PTSD

PTSD

no PTSD

Other diagnosis?

PTSD "plus"

PTSD only

Non-PTSD disorder

Subdiagnostic distress

Traumatic event
Lifetime Prevalence

- **MOOD DISORDERS**
  - Major depression
  - Bipolar disorder

- **ANXIETY DISORDERS**
  - GAD
  - Panic disorder
  - PTSD

- **SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS**
  - Alcohol use disorder
  - Drug use disorder

- Woman: 10%
- Man: 5%

Females and Males with Mood Disorders: 8%
Risk of PTSD in the US

- **54%** for Kidnapping, torture, captivity
- **49%** for Rape
- **32%** for Beating
- **15%** for Shooting or stabbing
- **4%** for Natural disaster

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

A. Exposure to actual or threatened death, serious injury, or sexual violence

B. Intrusion

C. Avoidance

D. Negative Thoughts and Feelings

E. Arousal and Reactivity
**Intervention Road Map**

**STEP 1**
- ASSESS for PTSD
- SCREEN for C & D symptoms
- DSM-5 diagnosis

**STEP 2**
- ASSESS OTHER DIAGNOSES
- DSM-5 diagnosis

**STEP 3**
- SELECT TREATMENT BASED ON DIAGNOSES
  - Medications
  - Psychotherapy
  - Education/reassurance

- PTSD "plus"
- PTSD only
- Other diagnosis
- No diagnosis
- No PTSD
Addressing the Mental Health Needs of the General Public
Disaster Psychiatry

Mental Health Consequences

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Substance use
- Loneliness
- Domestic violence/child abuse

Galea S, JAMA Internal Medicine, 2020.
Mental Health Solutions

- Digital technologies
- Social media
- Routines
- Nontraditional groups for psychological first aid
- Social distancing v. safe places
Quarantine Stressors

- Longer quarantine duration
- Inadequate information
- Inadequate supplies
- Fear, frustration, and boredom
- Financial loss
- Stigma

Quarantine Solutions

- Keep it as short as possible.
- Give as much information as possible.
- Provide adequate supplies.
- Reduce the boredom.
- Altruism is better than compulsion.

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New Directions
Resilience Resources

✓ Individual
  What do I do when things get hard?

✓ Community
  Who helps me when things get hard?

✓ Existential
  Who do I want to be when this is over?
Thank you

NJMS.Rutgers.edu/Psychiatry
APPENDIX
Psychological First Aid

FIVE MAJOR PRINCIPLES

Adapted from: Uniformed Services University, Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress, CSTSonline.org, 2020.
Psychological First Aid

Establish safety.

✓ Identify safe areas and behaviors.
✓ Provide accurate and updated information.

Adapted from: Uniformed Services University, Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress, CSTSonline.org, 2020.
Psychological First Aid

Teach calming skills.

- Acknowledge/normalize distress reactions.
- Safeguard and develop routines; restore a sense of normalcy.
- Teach diaphragmatic breathing and muscle relaxation techniques.
- Limit exposure to traditional and social media as increased use enhances distress.

Adapted from: Uniformed Services University, Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress, CSTSonline.org, 2020.
Psychological First Aid

Teach maintenance of natural body rhythms.

✓ Nutrition
✓ Sleep and rest
✓ Sex
✓ Exercise

Adapted from: Uniformed Services University, Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress, CSTSonline.org, 2020.
Maximize connectedness to social supports to the extent possible.

- This may require electronic rather than physical presence.
Psychological First Aid

Foster hope and optimism while not denying risk.

Adapted from: Uniformed Services University, Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress, CSTSonline.org, 2020.
1. Psychiatry.org
2. CSTSonline.org