

RESEARCH UPDATE ON MENTAL HEALTH SYMPTOMS IN POST- COVID-19 CONDITION

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POST-COVID-19 CONDITION (WHO, 2021)

- Occurs 3 months after onset of (probable) COVID-19 infection
- Symptoms: Fatigue, shortness of breath, cognitive dysfunction but also mental health symptoms, including:
 - ✓ Anxiety
 - ✓ Depression
 - ✓ Sleep disorders
- Symptoms last at least 2 months

MENTAL HEALTH CONSEQUENCES OF THE PANDEMIC



Populations affected:

- General population
- Older adults
- People with pre-existing health conditions
- People with specific mental disorders
- Children and young adults
- People living under precarious circumstances
- People in humanitarian and conflict settings
- People with severe COVID-19 infection
- **People who have post-COVID-19 condition**

COVID-19 AND MENTAL HEALTH; SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE

Worldwide **significant increase in mental health problems in the general population** in the first year of the pandemic:

Major depressive disorder cases: increase of 27.6% (95% UI 25.1–30.3)¹

Anxiety disorders cases: 25.6% increase (95% UI 23.2–28.0)¹

Risk groups: younger age, female gender and pre-existing health conditions (though data are mixed)²

¹GBD 2020, Santomauro et al. *Lancet*. 2021;398(10312):1700–1712; ²Witteveen et al (in prep)

COVID-19 AND MENTAL HEALTH; SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE

No evidence for increased suicide rates in most countries during first year of the pandemic

Younger people at higher risk for suicidal behaviours

No changes in or fewer hospital presentations for self-harm

POST-COVID-19 CONDITION

Evidence so far limited

Systematic review and meta analysis in 51 studies (18 917 patients)¹:

- Sleep disturbance: 27.4% (95% CI 21.4–34.4%)
- Fatigue: 24.4% (95% CI 17.5–32.9%)
- Objective cognitive impairment: 20.2% (95% CI 10.3–35.7%)
- Anxiety 19.1% (95% CI 13.3–26.8%)
- Posttraumatic stress disorder symptoms: 15.7% (9.9–24.1%)

¹ Badenoch et al (2022), *Brain Communications*, 4 (1)

POST-COVID-19 CONDITION

Limitations:

Very few primary studies with control groups

Impact of COVID-19 severity unclear

Long-term follow-up data needed



⁸ ¹ Badenoch et al (2022), *Brain Communications*, 4 (1)

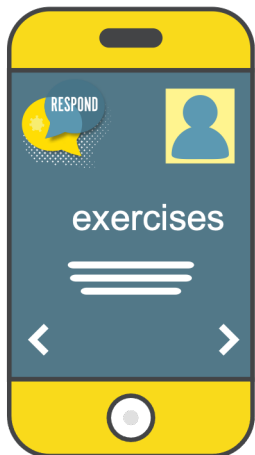
DISRUPTIONS IN DELIVERY OF SERVICES

Disruptions partly mitigated by shift towards e-mental health services

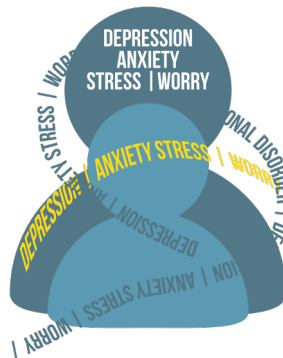
Barriers: low levels of technological literacy among certain population groups, privacy issues, lack of provider experience, lack of digital infrastructure

RESPOND

ACCESSIBLE, EVIDENCE-BASED PSYCHOSOCIAL INTERVENTIONS



DOING WHAT MATTERS IN
TIMES OF STRESS (DWM)



PROBLEM MANAGEMENT
PLUS (PM+)



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