



Since January 2020 Elsevier has created a COVID-19 resource centre with free information in English and Mandarin on the novel coronavirus COVID-19. The COVID-19 resource centre is hosted on Elsevier Connect, the company's public news and information website.

Elsevier hereby grants permission to make all its COVID-19-related research that is available on the COVID-19 resource centre - including this research content - immediately available in PubMed Central and other publicly funded repositories, such as the WHO COVID database with rights for unrestricted research re-use and analyses in any form or by any means with acknowledgement of the original source. These permissions are granted for free by Elsevier for as long as the COVID-19 resource centre remains active.



China adopts non-contact free consultation to help the public cope with the psychological pressure caused by new coronavirus pneumonia



A novel coronavirus pneumonia outbreak occurred in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China in December 2019, and was followed by worldwide concern. Like all outbreaks, the first possible psychological response of the general population is fear and panic of being infected. They also fear that the epidemic will continue. At present, there is a lot of information about the epidemic on the Internet. We don't know whether it is true or false. Because of the novel coronavirus pneumonia, we cancelled all kinds of parties and could only stay at home, so life was boring. At this time, some people may have anxiety, depression, despair, anger and other emotional reactions (Xiang et al., 2020). People buy a lot of things by hearsay, such as masks, disinfectants and even vegetables in supermarkets. Therefore, in fighting novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) in 2020, special attention should be paid to the mental health issues of the public (Zandifar and Badrfam, 2020).

How to alleviate the mental health of ordinary people is very important to control the epidemic situation and their own long-term health. For most of the public, emotional and behavioural responses are part of an adaptive response to extraordinary stress, and psychotherapy techniques such as those based on the stress-adaptation model might be helpful (Folkman and Greer, 2000). Iranian scholars believe that what is important is that controlling the disease requires proper and comprehensive management (Zandifar and Badrfam, 2020). As the Chinese government has strong cohesion and efficiency, it has just an advantage in this respect.

On January 27, 2020, the National Health Committee of China released the guidance on national psychological crisis intervention in 2020, which provided various guidances for people's mental health in epidemic areas. In order to better cope with the mass psychological injury and social impact caused by the epidemic, on March 18, 2020, the National Health Commission of China announced the psychological counseling for novel coronavirus pneumonia. To solve these mental health problems, the local government of Xianning City, which is adjacent to Wuhan City, implemented the helpful policies in time. As psychiatrists can play pivotal role in supporting the well-being of those affected and their families, the at-risk healthcare staff as well as the public (Banerjee, 2020), the local government have organized psychological consultation team and mental health team to provide free psychological consultation service to relieve the psychological pressure of the masses. Because people are isolated at home, the traditional face-to-face psychological consultation becomes impossible. Basically, all psychological counseling is carried out through non-contact way. Contacting by phone, QQ or WeChat, "one-to-one" psychological counseling can be carried out. The network also provides a variety of free movies and TV plays for the public to enjoy. As an affiliated hospital of the local medical college, our hospital has set up a psychological intervention group. The professional psychological doctors who have received the psychological assistance training in response to the 2019-nCoV provide psychological consultation for the public. Some experts argue that it is

debatable whether such interventions are universally appropriate for targeted populations, which include lay people, frontline responders, and family members of patients with COVID-19 (Yao et al., 2020). But in the case of isolation of the whole country, online psychological consultation is the only way to be adopted, which is better than nothing. Our practice also proves that most of the psychological pressure of the people who accept these interventions has been relieved.

In March 31, 2020, 0 novel coronavirus pneumonia case was confirmed in Hubei Province, including 0 in Wuhan and 0 in 16 other cities. Most of the local citizens have successfully overcome the psychological discomfort caused by the isolation period. The non-contact free psychological consultation has played the key role and may be used for reference for the efficiency and quality of future crisis intervention by the Chinese government and other governments around the world.

Financial disclosure

This work is supported by the doctor initiated fund project of Hubei University of Science and Technology (BK1415). The funders had no role in study design, data collection and analysis, decision to publish, or preparation of the manuscript.

Declaration of Competing Interest

None of the authors have any conflicts of interest to disclose.

Acknowledgement

Pay tribute to all health workers who are battling with the epidemic.

References

- Banerjee, D., 2020. The COVID-19 outbreak: crucial role the psychiatrists can play. *Asian J. Psychiatr.* 50, 102014.
- Folkman, S., Greer, S., 2000. Promoting psychological well-being in the face of serious illness: when theory, research and practice inform each other. *Psychooncology* 9, 11–19.
- Xiang, Y.T., Yang, Y., Li, W., Zhang, L., Zhang, Q., Cheung, T., Ng, C.H., 2020. Timely mental health care for the 2019 novel coronavirus outbreak is urgently needed. *Lancet Psychiatry* 7, 228–229.
- Yao, H., Chen, J.-H., Xu, Y.-F., 2020. Rethinking online mental health services in China during the COVID-19 epidemic. *Asian J. Psychiatr.* 50, 102015.
- Zandifar, A., Badrfam, R., 2020. Iranian mental health during the COVID-19 epidemic. *Asian J. Psychiatr.* 51, 101990.

Zhaokui Dan

Clinical Medical College, Hubei University of Science and Technology,
Xianning 437100, China

E-mail address: 509852081@qq.com.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajp.2020.102093>

Received 1 April 2020; Received in revised form 4 April 2020; Accepted 7 April 2020

Available online 10 April 2020

1876-2018/ © 2020 Elsevier B.V. All rights reserved.