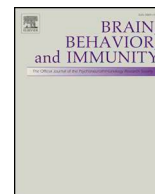




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## Traumatization in medical staff helping with COVID-19 control



Dear Editor,

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak is a big global problem at present. We read the publication on “Vicarious traumatization in the general public, members, and non-members of medical teams aiding in COVID-19 control” with a great interest. Li et al. studied vicarious traumatization scores and concluded that “Early strategies that aim to prevent and treat vicarious traumatization in medical staff and general public are extremely necessary (Li et al., 2020).” The reliability of mobile app-based questionnaire might be a weak point as it is unable to identify those who did not respond to the questionnaire. In addition, traumatization scoring might lack sufficient details for a proper plan for corrective actions. Nevertheless, we appreciate the effort to address the problem.

We would like to share ideas and experience from the second country where COVID-19 appeared in January 2020, Thailand (Yasri and Wiwanitkit, 2019). In Thailand, similar problems in the medical staff involved in the control of COVID-19 are observed. Stress and psychological problems of the medical staffs can be expected, but are not well addressed.

There are several causes on traumatization, including high workload, lack of protective devices, non-effective infection control system, as well as, surprisingly, direct insult by patients, such as rude verbal insult and intentional coughing directed toward medical staff. Such aggressive attitude toward doctors and other medical staff is not a generic problem with Thailand healthcare; it seems to be a specific problem with coronavirus outbreak, because local people also have high levels of stress, because of the crisis situation. Some patients from

more difficult socioeconomic background might be particularly stressed, and thus more aggressive.

We also call for the urgent and appropriate support to all medical staffs around the world who is working hard for COVID-19 outbreak control (Banu, 2020; Wiwanitkit, 2020).

### Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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