

FIGHTING BACK AGAINST COVID'S TRIPLE THREAT

By Liz R. Scott, PhD

It is important to acknowledge that COVID-19 has resulted in an increase in mental health concerns. It is also vital to review the emerging evidence-based mental health support strategies. The evidence supports an anticipated wave of mental health claims, and the ripples will last for years beyond the cure. The CDC believes it is possible to compare the COVID-19 pandemic to crisis situations (Crisis Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014).

Three broad structured intervention categories of **Organizational, Social, and Individual.**

The information presented in this paper is meant to assist workplace managers, occupational health, and human resource professionals in designing appropriate policies and plans to assist in the protection of workforce mental health. In the face of "infobesity" and random social media opinions, it is vital to use the factual literature emerging to ensure appropriate strategies to mitigate the mental health tsunami.

Evidence shows COVID-19 has triggered mental health challenges on three planes: organizational, social and individual.

Organizational

- Organizations can play a vital role in assisting with the prevention of mental health concerns.
- Naturally, the first step is ensuring the health and safety of the workplace and adhering to social distancing and other mandated recommendations (Anderson et al., 2020; Hamouche, 2020).
- Having infrastructure ready can assist, such as mental health first aid, online tools, tele-counseling, prompt access to care, and peer support networks (Anderson et al., 2020; Carbone, 2020; Ransing et al., 2020).
- Optimizing communication and transparency is an important human resource role throughout the pandemic (Brooks et al., 2020; Carbone, 2020; Giorgi et al., 2020).

Individual

- In the face of "infobesity" and random social media opinions, it is vital to use the factual literature emerging to ensure appropriate strategies to mitigate the mental health tsunami.
- Communicating with each other, exchanging thoughts, having discussions, recommending stress management techniques, relaxation ideas, and encouragement of exercise, online contact with family or friends, and time management (Rastegar Kazerooni et al., 2020).
- Another practical step is managing media consumption, accessing factual information, and finding ways to foster social connections.
- Lack of interpersonal communication has been linked to poor physical, emotional, and mental health (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Bowling, 1995; Galea et al., 2020; Prang et al., 2015).
- As social beings, we need each other.

Social

- The Canadian government has implemented several mental health programs to assist in facilitating access to mental health resources.
- There is some evidence that the lack of mental health professionals' availability has increased the risk of distress (Brooks et al., 2020; Ho et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2020; Zhou et al.).
- Some of the programs made available to Canadians include government-funded iCBT and Wellness Together Canada. In 2019, CMHA launched a free, guided self-help program. Additionally, many mental health resources exist online merely through a quick Google search.



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