

**Viewpoint****Mental Health Problems during COVID-19 Pandemic****Achmad Yasin Mustamin<sup>1\*</sup>, Yanasta Yudo Pratama<sup>2</sup>, Tri Ani Marwati<sup>1</sup>**<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Public Health, Universitas Ahmad Dahlan, Yogyakarta, Indonesia<sup>2</sup> Faculty of Medicine, Public Health and Nursing, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Sleman, Indonesia**\*Correspondence:** [achmadyasin0207@gmail.com](mailto:achmadyasin0207@gmail.com). Phone: +62 823-2897-5432

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Infection with the SARS-CoV-2 virus causes Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome and has become a worldwide pandemic. Since December 31, 2019, in the city of Wuhan, China, human-to-human transmission has caused the world to focus on handling the health crisis. The psychosocial impact of COVID-19 in the form on mental health has not been comprehensively identified. One of the evidence is an increase in cell-free genomic DNA (cc-gDNA) and cell-free mitochondrial DNA (ccf-mtDNA), an increase in hematocrit, calcium and phosphorus after 2 weeks of isolation from 2015 MERS-CoV infection, which is an indicator of psychophysical stress in patients. This makes the basis for further support or treatment for patients with mental health problems.

Mental health is essential to achieving a comprehensive degree of health, but it has not become a top priority in some developing countries. The COVID-19 pandemic has made it difficult for people to access physical and mental health services. The situation of this pandemic pushes WHO and mental health services as an integral component of the condition. Only a third of healthcare providers in the United States can receive standardized mental health care. In developing countries with low and middle incomes, 75% more people experience neurological disorders, mental disorders, and addictive substance abuse. The prevalence of patients affected by Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is around 4-41%, and the prevalence of major depression due to the epidemic - increased by 7%. Unfortunately, of those with mental disorders, only a tiny percentage get proper treatment.

The COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia has brought changes in behaviour in society. The high mortality rate, and massive transmission, cause mental health problems for families, sufferers, and health workers. Mental health problems include depression, anxiety, post-COVID-19 trauma and fear of reinfection with COVID-19. An online study by the Association of Indonesian Mental Illness Specialists (PDSKJI) showed that 66% of respondents were depressed, and 63% experienced anxiety due to the pandemic. The main symptoms in respondents who experience anxiety are worries that bad things will happen in their lives, irritability, difficulty sleeping, and difficulty feeling relaxed. The main symptoms in respondents who experience depression are disturbances in starting sleep or waking up suddenly during sleep, lack of confidence, lack of energy and interest in activities, and fatigue.



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Isolation and social distancing, depression experienced by health workers, economic pressure, stigma and discrimination in patients with COVID-19 are the main risk factors for patients undergoing depression out of 14 commonly found. The consequences of social distancing and self-isolation have led to feelings of "alienated" or "isolated" and have interfered with normal activities as social beings. In addition, the global economic crisis has triggered a lot of unemployment and financial pressures, thus increasing the risk of suicide among people. Not only in the community but also among medical personnel, the potential for depression and suicide is due to stigma and discrimination from the surrounding community. For example, local people avoid and close the door on health workers, they are also prohibited from using public transportation, ostracized by their families, and some are divorced from their husbands or wives.

The Indonesian government constantly pursues preventive efforts in tackling the mental health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic by compiling mental health guidelines and providing psychosocial support during the COVID-19 pandemic, which refers to the policies of the WHO. The government cooperates with the Indonesian Psychologist Association (HIMPSI) to provide "Sejiwa" services to assist the community in overcoming mental disorders due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The government makes protocols and policies to optimize the integration of mental health services with the main focus on a public health-based approach and strengthening primary health services, especially in preventive efforts in terms of mental health.

**Keywords:** Mental Health; Pandemic COVID-19