



Mental Health Outcomes among Health Care Workers exposed to COVID-19 in a Tertiary Government Hospital in Pangasinan

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ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND:

The Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a major health crisis that affected 32 million people to date and caused death to 990,000 individuals. The impact of this pandemic on the healthcare system took its toll especially to the healthcare workers and its effect on their physical and mental health. We aim to assess severity of generalized anxiety, depression and subjective distress among medical, allied and ancillary healthcare workers (HCWs) who handled COVID-19 patients.

METHODOLOGY:

This is a cross sectional, survey- based study done from July 1 to August 31, 2020 involving healthcare workers who handled COVID-19 patients in a tertiary hospital in Pangasinan. The self-administered questionnaires used were the Generalized Anxiety Disorder- 7 for generalized anxiety, Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9) for depression and Impact of Events Scale-Revised (IES-R) for subjective distress.

RESULTS:

A total of 417 of 450 contacted individuals completed the survey, with a participation rate of 92.67%. Majority were women (64.57%) and 53.24% were aged 19 to 30 years old. Sixty percent of the respondents were nurses, 25.9% were physicians and the rest were composed of medical technologists (6.47%), radiologic technologists (5.52%) and respiratory therapists (1.68%). Subjective distress was noted to be present in 253 (60.67%) healthcare workers followed by anxiety 224 (53.72%) and depression 184 (44.12%). Allied health professionals and male participants experienced anxiety the most as well as subjective

distress. Depression was more severe among physicians (2 [1.85%]) and women (3 [1.1%]). Physicians and allied health professionals reported more severe degrees of mental health symptoms compared to nurses.

CONCLUSION:

In this study, a significant proportion of HCWs especially physicians and allied health professionals involved in handling and treating suspected and confirmed COVID-19 patients experienced generalized anxiety, depression and distress.

Keywords: COVID-19, Coronavirus, Depression, Stress, Anxiety, mental health, healthcare workers (HCWs)

BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Jaylo Abalos is a 30-year-old Diplomate in Internal Medicine (Philippine College of Physicians). He finished his medical studies year 2016 in Saint Louis University, Baguio City, Philippines and completed his residency training year 2021 in Region I Medical Center, Dagupan City, Philippines. He joined and won national and international research competitions and published in reputed journals. He is currently having his post residency deployment in a district hospital in Pangasinan. In the meantime, he is actively partaking in teaching various health education and organizing activities in rural areas and participating in research fora while preparing for his subspecialty training.

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