

19th ASEAN & Japan High Level Officials Meeting On Caring Societies
9 December (Thu.) 15:00-19:00 JST
10 December (Fri.) 15:00-19:00 JST

Fostering People Who Support Regional Mental Health Services

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Psychological disorders during the COVID-19 pandemic

- Anxiety, fear, compulsive behavior
- Frustration and restlessness
- Effects on sleep
- Hypersensitivity to changes in the physical condition, and health concerns
- Substance dependence
- Changes in health and values
- Onset and exacerbation of mental illness

(Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, obsessive-compulsive disorder, social anxiety disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, etc.)

[Guidelines for Mental Health Measures during the COVID-19 Pandemic 1st Edition](#)

https://www.jspn.or.jp/uploads/uploads/files/activity/COVID-19_20200625.pdf, downloaded on August 19, 2020

Support needed to maintain mental health

- The first nationwide state of emergency was in effect from April 16 (Thu.) to May 14 (Thu.), 2020.
- Prefectural mental health and welfare centers served as the contact points.
(During the state of emergency, a contact number available throughout the country was aired on TV)
- There was great uncertainty about the future in medical settings.
- In some cases, there was no room in the medical setting to care for medical staff.
- Many organizations, such as professional associations, NPOs, and academic societies, provided counseling services.
- Care was required for people with various mental health conditions.

Outlook for the future workload

Business area	Increase	No change	Decrease
Examination work and decisions	59	6	0
Counseling on mental health and welfare	44	21	0
Human resources development	43	22	0
Technical guidance and assistance for public health centers and municipalities	40	25	0
Planning	28	37	0
Dissemination and enlightenment	25	39	1
Research and study	15	48	2
Organizational development	13	48	4

Business	Increase	No change	Decrease
Measures against addiction	61	4	0
Decision on mental disability certification	60	5	0
Decision on medical care for persons with disabilities (psychiatric outpatients)	57	8	0
Counseling on COVID-19 and support for related organizations	56	7	1
Measures for withdrawals	49	16	0
Disaster mental health	47	18	0
Psychiatric Review Board office work	42	23	0
Measures against suicide	37	26	2
Counseling on other mental health and welfare problems	27	38	0
Utilization of mental health, medical and welfare information	24	39	1
Outreach	21	35	2
Regional transition and regional settlement	18	42	2
Psychiatric emergency system	11	51	0

N=65

The figure in a cell shows the number of centers. Red indicates cells with larger numbers, and green indicates cells with smaller numbers. The darker the color, the stronger the tendency.

Source: 2020 Health and Labour Sciences Research Grant, "Study on Policies to Promote the Functional Enhancement of Regional Mental Health, Medical and Welfare Systems" (principal investigator: Chiyo Fujii), joint study "Study on the Construction of an Integrated Community Care System for Mental Disorders" (co-researcher: Masayuki Noguchi)

Training during the COVID-19 pandemic

- It was prohibited or people had to refrain from moving across prefectural borders and to perform group training.
- The regulations were tough on local government officials who provided support.
- The spread of remote training made it possible to save travel time.
- People engaged in childcare or nursing care were also able to receive training at home.
- On-demand teaching materials, which can be viewed repeatedly, improved the learning effect.

Characteristics and need for remote support

- The transition to remote support is progressing rapidly, as it had served as a support platform during infectious disease disasters where it is difficult to go out or visit a medical institution.
- The most commonly used method of remote support was telephone counseling.
- E-mail counseling can be provided at night or on holidays (most e-mail counseling messages are sent at night or on holidays)
- SNS is more effective than the telephone for counseling if you do not want your family to know about it.
- With SNS counseling, the counselor and the counselee can share the situation and collaborate. However, it takes a relatively long time, and it is difficult to respond to each counselee.

Gurwitsch RH, S. H. (2020). Leveraging parent-child interaction therapy and telehealth capacities to address the unique needs of young children during the COVID-19 public health crisis. *Psychol Trauma*, 12(S1), S82-S84. doi:10.1037/tra0000863

National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD), Division of Viral Diseases. (2020). Uses of Telehealth during COVID-19 in Low Resource Non-U.S. Settings. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/>

Zeltzer D, V. A. (2020). Direct-to-Consumer Chat-Based Remote Care Before and During the COVID-19 Outbreak. *medRxiv*. doi:10.1101/2020.07.14.20153775

Support levels for psychological disorders and staff training

1. Knowledgeable and safe support

(Guidelines based on the PFA principles)

2. Support by trained professionals

(RAPID PFA, psychological triage training)

3. Medical care, or in some cases, an urgent response, is required

(Psychiatric medical care, emergency medical care)

Level 1:

Knowledgeable and safe support

Guidelines based on the PFA principles

PFA: Psychological First Aid

PFA action principles



Look

- Information about what happened and what is happening
- Who needs help
- Safety check
- Physical trauma
- Confirmation and awareness of imminent basic and practical needs
- Emotional reaction



Listen

- Get closer
- Self-introduction
- Attention and listening
- Accept emotions
- Listen to people's needs and concerns
- Help people in difficult situations find solutions to their needs and problems



Link

- Help people obtain information
- Help people link with loved ones and social support
- Help people tackle practical problems
- Help people make use of services and other support

What to do	What should not be done
Protecting people's privacy and keeping secrets about what you hear	Breaking the rules of confidentiality, even for a good reason
Providing emotional and practical support	Too inquisitive
Acting appropriately in consideration of the person's culture, age and gender	Rude attitude and inappropriate use of one's position as a rescuer
Listening attentively	Thinking about something else while the other person is talking about something important
Being aware of your own prejudices and preconceptions and trying not to be ruled by them	Determining the behavior and feelings of the other person
Respecting people's right to self-determination and helping them become self-reliant so that they can solve problems on their own	Showing what to do and how to solve the problem
Being honest and trustworthy	Making dishonest promises or giving false information
Connecting to the basic need	Seeking money or other profits as compensation to help the other person
Being aware when you cannot handle it	Overestimating your skills
Clearly showing people that they can continue receiving help even if they don't need it now	Continuing to push people too far even though they are not asking for help
Ending support in a respectful and reassuring way	Discontinuing the conversation and suddenly ending support without giving information on future support

Reply to email counseling:

Japan Academy of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing (2020)

- (1) Introduction (greetings and thanks to be involved in the counseling)
- (2) Consolation and respect
- (3) Empathy and acceptance
- (4) Approval and feedback (organization of situation)
- (5) Proposal of coping behavior
- (6) Consolation and kind words

2021 Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare Mental Health Promotion Project Mental Care Counseling Training Syllabus (Japanese Association of Mental Health Social Workers)

2021 Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare Mental Health Promotion Project Mental Care Counseling Training Syllabus

Target	Mental health social workers, certified psychologists, public health nurses, nurses
Goal	<p>Development of professionals who can appropriately respond to counseling on stress and anxiety caused by natural disasters, being a victim of crime or an accident, infectious disease pandemics (COVID-19, etc.) and the related economic and social impacts, as well as mental health counseling related to depression prevention, mental health promotion, and suicide prevention.</p> <p>Specifically, leadership training will be provided for people engaged in the four target occupations as well as administrative personnel in all prefectures so that they can provide training in individual regions to develop professionals and improve the system in the local areas.</p>

Lecture 1	Theme	Mental care from a preventive perspective		
	Purpose	Understanding how to respond to counseling related to depression prevention and mental health promotion		
	Contents	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is mental care? 2. Understanding the concept of prevention in regional mental health 3. Pathogenic mechanism of depression 4. Actual counseling on depression prevention 5. Actual counseling on mental health promotion 		
	Keywords	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ・ Mental care (concept) ・ Primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention ・ Mental health literacy ・ Living environment stressor ・ Stress response ・ Vulnerability – stress model ・ Risk factors for the onset of depression ・ Concept of psychological first aid (PDA) ・ Counseling for people with problems, but who are not ill 		
	Instructor			
Reference materials	—	Time	60 min.	

Lecture 2	Theme	Mental care during natural disasters and for victims of crime and accidents		
	Purpose	Understanding the psychological situation of disaster, crime and accident victims, as well as counseling skills and cooperative support		
	Contents	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Psychology of victims of natural disasters 2. Psychology of victims of crime 3. Psychology of victims of accidents 4. Skills to provide counseling for victims and how to provide cooperative support 		
	Points to note	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ・ While focusing on counseling for victims of natural disasters, which are expected to be common in certain regions, it is also necessary to consider how to handle victims of crime and accidents that may occur, even though these are rare. ・ In Lecture 2, PFA should be discussed based on use scenes. ・ Considering that sexual crime damage is also included in PTSD countermeasure training, it should also be incorporated in this training for enlightenment. 		
	Keywords	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ・ Acute stress disorder (ASD) ・ Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) ・ Depression ・ Panic disorder ・ Social anxiety ・ Psychological first aid (PFA) use scenes ・ Family care during an accident ・ Social support 		
Instructor				
Reference materials	—	Time	60 min.	

2021 Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare Mental Health Promotion Project Mental Care Counseling Training Syllabus (Japanese Association of Mental Health Social Workers)

Lecture 3	Theme	Mental care related to the COVID-19 pandemic		
	Purpose	Understanding the psychological effects of infectious disease pandemics, counseling skills, and cooperative support		
	Contents	1. Psychological effects of the COVID-19 pandemic 2. Counseling skills related to stress reactions during infectious disease pandemics and how to provide cooperative support 3. Remote counseling services		
	Keywords	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Psychological and social infectious diseases · Stress reactions peculiar to infectious disease pandemics · Anxiety and fear · Loss of social role · Helplessness · Isolation and prejudice · Modulation of the body clock · Rhythm of daily life · Self-care · Counseling skills (remote support, etc.) · Psychological triage 		
	Instructor			
Reference materials	—	Time	60 min.	

Lecture 4	Theme	Mental care for suicide prevention		
	Purpose	Understanding the current status of measures for suicide attempters, psychological state, counseling skills and cooperative support		
	Contents	1. Current status and psychological state of suicide attempters 2. Counseling skills for suicide attempters and those who are considering suicide, and how to provide cooperative support		
	Points to note	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · TIC should be included in the lecture, considering that the way counseling is conducted may change when the background of suicide attempters becomes known. 		
	Keywords	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Psychological tunnel vision · Strong and highly agitated suicidal ideation · Frustration · Response to suicidal ideation · Evaluation of the risk of repeated suicide attempts · Gatekeeper · Principle of “TALK” · Trauma informed care 		

Instructor			
Reference materials	—	Time	60 min.

Exercise 1	Theme	Group work (training on counseling cases)		
	Purpose	Improving the counseling skills in prefectures and designated cities by examining cases of mental care counseling among group members from multiple occupational backgrounds		
	Contents	1. Exercise using creative case examples 2. Discussions related to specific counseling 3. Examination of issues when implementing this training in prefectures and designated cities		
	How to proceed with the exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Provide the necessary materials so that participants can take on the role of a facilitator · Group participants according to their prefecture or designated city so that training can easily be conducted in each local municipality · Conduct case studies, and share issues involved in mental care training 		
	Keywords	· How to proceed with the exercise		
Reference materials		Time	90 min.	

Japanese Association of Mental Health Social Workers

Online training screen example

2021 Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare Mental Health Promotion Project

Mental Care Counseling Training

Lecture 3

Mental care related to the COVID-19 pandemic



Medical professionals wearing PPE and working long hours



Photo: St. Luke's International University Public Relations Division

- Repeated putting on and taking off of PPE while having to pay attention to it
- Being hot as a result of exhaling and the body temperature
- Having difficulty to replenish water lost by sweating and to pass urine (wearing diapers)
- Having to speak loudly and not being able to have delicate conversations
- Confronting the anxiety of patients who cannot meet their families
- Assisting with remote family visits (unfamiliarity and irritation)
- Having to complete care within a short time
- Not being able to provide adequate care

A screen shot forming part of the online mental care counseling training provided by the Japanese Association of Mental Health Social Workers

Level 2.

Support by trained professionals

RAPID PFA, psychological triage training

Flow of remote counseling (in line with RAPID-PFA)

Rapport Establishment of rapport and repeated listening	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Empathy and rapport2. Keeping calm3. Repeated listening
Assessment Assessment: Listening	Screening and scrutiny Physical health, physical safety, psychological distress, cognitive and intellectual function, emotional and behavioral expressions, interpersonal resources, material resources
Prioritization Psychological triage and prioritization	Urgency Psychological triage
Intervention Intervention to reduce pain	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Catharsis2. Stress management3. Obtaining the help of family and friends4. Explanatory guidance and hope
Disposition Closing and access to ongoing care	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Summarizing the points and conveying information and resources that can be utilized2. Recommending medical institutions or specialized institutions if necessary3. Offering words of consolation and ending the session with encouraging words

Mental health workshop for counselors

Time: September 29 (Wed.) 9:30 – 16:00

Place: Webcast (from TKP Shimbashi Shiodome Business Center)

(1) 9:30 – 10:10: Preliminary Questionnaire (40 min.), Professor Murayama

(2) 10:10 – 10:40: Introduction and Prevention (30 min.), Professor Nakao

(3) 10:40 – 11:10: How to Receive Remote Counseling (30 min.), Professor Kayama

10-minute break

(4) 11:20 – 12:00: Mental Health Screening (40 min.), Professor Takahashi

50-minute lunch

(5) 12:50 – 14:50: RAPID PFA (120 min.), Professor Oya and Professor Kuga

10-minute break

(6) 15:00 – 15:30: CBT-like Intervention (30 min.), Professor Murayama

(7) 15:30 – 15:50: Post-questionnaire (20 min.), Professor Murayama

(8) 15:50 – 16:00: Summary and Q & A (10 min.), Professor Nakao and Professor Kuga

電話によるリモート支援
Remote support by phone



相談者 45歳女性
Counselee: 45-year-old female



電話によるリモート支援
Remote support by phone



相談者 45歳 女性
Counselee: 45-year-old female

Consider communication methods together

コミュニケーション方法を共に考える

Points to note when providing information

- If there is too much information to choose from, it will lose its individuality and just become the same as a regular pamphlet or portal site.
- Provide specific information that can be used for self-care so that the person can handle it and achieve a sense of success.
- Let the person talk about past successful experiences and use counseling as an opportunity for empowerment.



Mental health of counselors

- Under the COVID-19 pandemic, counselors themselves are also victims of the pandemic and feel various kinds of stress and difficulties. Having to listen to people talking about difficult and sometimes life-threatening situations under such circumstances is a great psychological burden.
- Counselors may feel emotionally shaken, hurt or helpless.
- It is important for counselors to maintain their own self-care and connect with people who provide support.
- It is important to prepare a system that supports counselors, providing them an opportunity to meet others after they had been counseling, where they can share the content of the counseling as well as their own feelings, and receive advice.

International Federation of Red Cross And Red Crescent Societies. (2020). Remote Psychological First Aid during a COVID-19 outbreak.

Retrieved from <https://pscentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/IFRC-PS-Centre.-Remote-PFA-during-a-COVID-19-outbreak.-Final.-ENG.pdf>

Manual for Dealing with Mental Health Problems during the COVID-19 Pandemic (2021), 2020 Health, Labour Administration Research Grant (principal investigator: Tomohiro Nakao)



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