



Editorial

Depression and prevention during the COVID-19 pandemic

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ABSTRACT

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic affects all aspects, namely aspects of health, economy, education, and social life. Depression is a problem that everyone is at risk of experiencing during the COVID-19 pandemic. The condition of depression dramatically affects quality and productivity, primarily if it occurs at a productive age. Depression requires primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention at individual, family, group, and community levels.

INTRODUCTION

Depression is one of the most common mental disorders. Depression is a health problem that significantly affects quality and productivity if it occurs at a productive age. World Health Organization (WHO) data shows that 280 million people live with depression.¹ As many as 800,000 suicides are the result of depression.² US adolescents aged 12-17 years are estimated to have a major depressive disorder; as many as 13.3% and 60.15% do not receive treatment. Adolescents experience persistent sadness or hopelessness, severe thoughts of suicide, suicidal planning, and suicide attempts.³ The highest depression sufferers are 18-25 years (17%).⁴ Basic health research data in Indonesia shows that the prevalence of depression aged > 15 years is 6.1%.⁵

The cause of depression is the thought process; people with depression have negative interpretations of many things. Depression will develop negative thoughts, always think about failure, blame themselves, continuously evaluate themselves, and feel useless. Negative thoughts lead to deviations in the way of thinking. The depression triad refers to a person's judgment to be unable to cope with environmental demands.⁶

Depression occurs more often in women than men. Another study showed that the prevalence of major depressive episodes was higher in women (10.5%) than in men (6.2%).^{4,7} Psychological changes in women are more sensitive than in men. Women prioritize feelings in planning everything, while men prioritize logic.⁸ Women are twice as often diagnosed with depression as men. Women admit to depression more often than men, and women tend to show symptoms of depression, so health workers more easily see them.⁶

DEPRESSION IS A SERIOUS PROBLEM

Depression is a psychosocial problem that is not detected early on and is known after showing symptoms of problems such as suicide.⁹ Depression is a mental illness with the primary symptom of sadness, accompanied by other psychological symptoms, somatic disorders, and psychomotor disorders within a certain period, and is classified into affective disorders.¹⁰ Depression is often associated with feelings of sadness, depression, hopelessness, misery, and unhappiness.¹¹

Everyone is at risk for depression. Depression is a sensitive topic in society because it is considered a shameful thing. Individuals who are depressed will tend to interpret negative thoughts from what happens in a depressed state. Other studies have shown that shyness or reluctance to consult with anyone increases the severity of depressive symptoms.¹²

COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND DEPRESSION

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic affects all aspects, namely aspects of health, economy, education, and social life. Other research results show that the COVID-19 pandemic has affected people's lives and has caused economic losses. This increases the incidence of depression during the pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused mental health problems in the community. Other research results show that 78.9% of people experience depression during the COVID-19 pandemic.¹³ The COVID-19 pandemic causes physical damage to infected individuals and the community's mental health.⁷ Physical distancing and self-isolation make depression worse.¹⁴

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The COVID-19 pandemic has led to school closures reducing access to mental health checks and health care for vulnerable youth. The pandemic has also resulted in unemployment, financial and emotional stress, fear of contagion of COVID-19 infection, quarantine, social isolation, and shortage of personal protective equipment.^{14,15} Depression has a significant causative relationship with rapid social change and negative stress. Unemployment causes depression which is one of the factors that cause suicide.¹⁶

STRATEGY: DEPRESSION PREVENTION

The integrated implementation strategy aims to anticipate and reduce the mental health effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.¹⁷ Mental health can be used to evaluate the impact of strategies for dealing with mental health problems during a pandemic.¹⁸ Depression prevention is carried out at the individual, family, group, and community levels. Collaborating with families, groups, and community workers is necessary to prevent depression.

Recognizing the problem of depression

Another study showed that humans experienced a depressed mood or lost interest or pleasure in daily activities for two weeks. Problems arise such as problems sleeping, eating, fatigue, decreased concentration, or self-esteem. This indicates that mental health treatment takes a minimum of two weeks. Promotion of mental health and depression prevention in the form of health campaigns and screening.¹⁹

Family Advocacy

Advocacy ensures families and youth receive mental health support to reduce family conflict and child abuse.³

The support system from religious leaders, family, peer groups, and health workers

Someone communicates with the closest people, such as family, friends, colleagues, supervisors, or health officials.^{12,20} Religious practice improves mental health.²¹ Collaboration between schools and health services to address the mental health needs of adolescents.³ Self-efficacy and self-esteem enhancement programs are used to prevent depression.²²

Provision of mental health services in health promotion and preventive efforts.

People with depression need a mental health support system.¹⁴ Online psychological support services.²³ Everyone gets counseling and psychological services from health professionals. Depression is a severe problem that requires prompt and appropriate treatment. Individuals who already experience psychosocial problems should seek health care from professional health workers, such as nurses or psychologists. The use of telephone, internet or social media platforms is a strategy that can be used to provide mental health care services. People are given self-

help psychological care books for their health care at home.¹⁵

The stigma of a person, family, group, and society toward the problem of depression dramatically affects the speed of case finding and the accuracy of the treatment given. An optimistic view that everyone has a risk of experiencing depression will increase the need and reduce the shame to seek mental health consultations with health services. Prevention of depression during the COVID-19 pandemic requires an integrated implementation strategy that is a collaboration of families, groups, and communities.

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