COVID-19 RELATED STRESS, DEPRESSION AND MENTAL HEALTH

Mental **Health**

INTRODUCTION

- all over the world, people are facing serious impacts on their health and psychosocial wellbeing due to the COVID-19 pand

- A survey of 1,000 persons in N/A who have been diagnosed with anxiety or depression found that 63 percent of people reported their anxiety or depression symptoms were "worse" or "much worse" during the COVID-19 pandemic than they were before

- Prescription fills for <u>depression</u> and <u>anxiety</u> shot up in 2020. Symptoms of depression and anxiety have worsened during the pandemic.

- Other people are particularly vulnerable to <u>loneliness</u>, <u>social isolation</u> and other mental health problems that may arise from long-term social distancing during the pandemic

- Also, all over the world, some people are <u>losing their jobs</u>. There have been rising cases of suicide due to the raging COVID-19 pandemic.

- WHO noted that the main psychological impact to date is elevated rates of <u>stress</u> or anxiety

- Regarding older people and also those with underlying health conditions, having been identified as more vulnerable to COVID-19, and to be told that <u>you are very vulnerable, can be extremely frightening and very fear-inducing.</u>

- Bereavement, isolation, loss of income and fear are triggering mental health conditions or exacerbating existing one

THE NIGERIAN STUDY

A study conducted to examine the psychological distress experience of Nigerians during the COVID-19 pandemic, across gender from March 20, 2020, to April 12, 2020, revealed
 the prevalence of
✓ insomnia,
✓ depression
✓ and posttraumatic stress symptoms
among Nigerians during the COVID-19 pandemic

SUMMARY OF COMMON COVID-SPECIFIC MENTAL ILLNESSES

- ❑ **Stress**
- ❑ **Depression**
- ❑ **Insomnia**
- ❑ **Fear & anxiety**
- ❑ Others, e.g. suicidal ideation

STRESS

Stress can cause the following:

✓Changes in appetite, energy, desires, and interests
✓Difficulty concentrating and making decisions
✓Feelings of fear, anger, sadness, worry, numbness, or frustration
✓Difficulty sleeping or nightmares
✓Physical reactions, such as headaches, body pains, stomach problems, and skin rashes

✓Worsening of mental health conditions

✓Increased use of tobacco, alcohol, and other substances

DEPRESSION

Depression can cause the following:

✓Hopelessness and feeling of sadness
✓Loss of interest in pleasurable events and sex
✓Changes in appetite and weight
✓Difficulty sleeping or nightmares
✓Irritability
✓Uncontrolled and fluctuating emotions
✓Suicidal ideation

ANXIETY

- ✓ Nervousness, restlessness, or feeling tense
- ✓ feelings of danger, panic, or dread
- ✓ Rapid heart rate
- ✓ Rapid breathing
- ✓ Increased sweating
- ✓ Trembling or muscle twitching
- ✓ Trouble focusing or thinking clearly

ADDRESSING COVID-RELATED MENTAL ILLNESSES

To help improve the mood during the pandemic, it is important to

 Have a daily routine

❖ Engage in activities that are enjoyable and focus on activities that bring joy and make these activities part of daily routine

-.Enjoying a meal with family or friends -Regularly speaking with family and friends over the - Playing cards with family or friends - Reading a book. Relaxation/m

❖ Talk to family and friends regularly

Maintain community, religious and/or spiritual involvement. For example, you can follow services on the television, radio or the Internet if available • Join community or peer support groups or use telephone helplines or groups on social media, if available.

❖ Try relaxation, meditation, and low-impact exercises

❖ Consider cutting down on news updates to give the mind

 a break from panic-inducing, stressful media reports.

❖. Call 0r visit a Doctor, psychologist or counsellor

❖Use telemedicine

If COVID-19 is keeping you from visiting your doctor or pharmacy, but you need a new prescription, consider using a telemedicine service.

Managing The Health Hazards of Remote Working

- The Coronavirus World-wide pandemic has drastically modified the way of working

- Social distancing, a major preventive measure of COVID-19 has limited the number of staff per office space

- Staff with underlying medical conditions also need to stay away. These include respiratory infection, TB, Asthma, Cancer, Pregnancy, HIV, etc

- Consequently, staff now have to work remotely from office. This could be at home, in the car, or on the field

But Remote Working is now known to have health hazards

Work now demands time far beyond what might be considered normal work day. Work schedule has vanished as work goes on round the clock, in endless meetings

1. Clash of meetings leads to regular multi tasking, time management problem and stress

2. Sedentary life style with its attendant problems of arthritis, BP, weak immune system

3. Postural pain

4. Altered sleep pattern

5. Mental: anxiety, depression, etc

Managing the hazards of remote work

Drawing from the 1918 pandemic experience, remote work may have become the new normal, at least for a few months:

Organisation level

personal level

CORPORATE MANAGEMENT

1. **Corporate Work culture**
   - working time regulations – define work hours
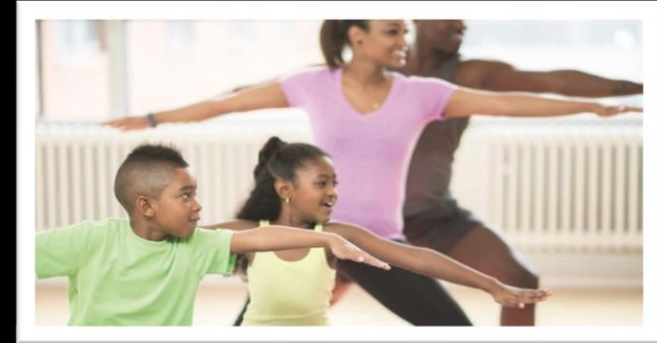   - week-end time off
   - vacation policy

2. **Rules for Meetings?**
   - duration; spacing;
     - odd hours/ emergency (occasionally)

PERSONAL MANAGEMENT

1. Set up reminders to take breaks. Create flexible time for physical activity - skipping, jogging, aerobics, gym.

    - **Regular stretching is highly recommended**.

2. Set appointments on your calendar for the end of the day to get yourself out of your "home office."

    - **Learn to create time also for family (and socials)**

3. Make conscious attempts to create time schedule for refreshment, adequate sleep and Relaxation

4. **Dual career couples and distractions**

    - role redistribution

    - consideration of less demanding job by a partner

    - **put up a "do not disturb" sign when in meetings.**

5. Seek Advise   (HCMD, mentoring, M/A, psychologist

    etc). For job-related issues, anxiety, panic, etc

    - Reach out to friends, family and colleagues to ward off loneliness

6. Escape. If all else fails, try going out, like, the library,

    or a branch. (but remember covid)

Suicide prevention

- If you think someone is at immediate risk of self-harm or hurting another person:

- Call 911
or your local emergency number.

- Stay with
the person until help arrives.

- Remove any
guns, knives, medications, or other things that may cause harm.

- Listen,
but don't judge, argue, threaten, or yell

FINALLY

- Mental health issues should be openly discussed
- More awareness campaigns on basic means of overcoming psychological distress should be encouraged on media and in organizations to foster mental healthiness. (E.g women's network, mental health week, etc_)

THANK YOU