A Physical and Psychosocial Response for a Post-COVID-19 Workplace

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Objectives

1. What are some guidelines to promote physical safety in the workplace?
2. How is psychosocial different than physical safety?
3. Why use a psychosocial approach?
4. What should employers look for in regard to supporting their employees?
5. What is the difference between burnout and having a mental health diagnosis?
6. How can I create a plan to help staff cope?
7. How do I support staff?
Physical & Psychosocial

Workplace Burnout

Global Covid-19 Pandemic

Mental Health: Depression Anxiety Trauma Stress

Social Unrest: Racial Equality
Physical Safety

- Resurgence
- Resuming Services
- Workplace Safety
- Consumer/Patient Safety
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

  - Relief for Healthcare Facilities
  - Framework for Non-COVID-19 Care
  - COVID-19 Healthcare Systems Tips
  - Preparedness (Healthcare provider checklist, mitigating staff shortages)

# Preparedness Tools for Healthcare Professionals and Facilities Responding to Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Updated July 29, 2020

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<td>Learn how to prepare your healthcare facility for a hurricane or other natural disaster during COVID-19.</td>
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<td>COVID-19Surge Tool</td>
<td>COVID-19Surge is a spreadsheet-based tool that hospital administrators and public health officials can use to estimate the surge in demand for hospital-based services during the COVID-19 pandemic.</td>
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<td>A phone script, decision algorithm, and tailored care messages for Children (2-17 years) or Adults (≥ 18 years) with Possible COVID-19.</td>
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**CDC Preparedness Tools (July 29, 2020)**

The Foundation of the Pennsylvania Medical Society
Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)

• Guidance on Returning to Work
  • Planning for Reopening
  • Applicable OSHA Standards and Required Protections in the Workplace
  • Employer Frequently Asked Questions

• OSHA Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19
  • Developed in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to help employers respond in the event of coronavirus in the workplace.

• [https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/](https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/)
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

- Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes
- CDC/EPA Cleaning & Disinfecting Guidance
- EPA-approved disinfectants
- https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2-covid-19
psy·cho·so·c
cial

/ˌsīkōˈsōSHəl/

adjective

relating to the interrelation of social factors and individual thought and behavior
Psychosocial Factors

• Mood status
  • anxiety, depression, distress

• Social factors
  • socioeconomic status, education, employment, religion, ethnicity, family, relationships with others, changes in personal roles

• Pre-existing vs exacerbation by exposure to pandemic, racial inequality, and burnout
Covid-19-Related Psychosocial Stressors

- Disease and illness–related stressors
  - exposures to infected sources, infected family members, loss of loved ones, physical distancing
- Secondary adversities
  - economic loss
- Psychological effects
  - depression, anxiety, psychosomatic preoccupations, insomnia
- Social effects
  - increased substance use, and domestic violence
- Indicators of vulnerability
  - pre-existing physical or psychological conditions
A psychosocial approach may help in the following areas:

- Help your employees care for their health
- Provide psychological support and protection
- Build and reshape a culture of trust and respect
- Guide resource allocation
  - Understand employees’ current needs, wants, stressors, goals
- Individualize the response & reduce barriers to care
  - open reluctance to seeking care
  - perception of need for care
  - cultural assumptions
  - preference for self-reliance due to mistrust
Why Address Psychosocial Factors in the Workplace?

- Communication structures
- One central team
- Social support networks
- Incentives to reinforce healthy behaviors
Remember...

- Health care workers are at risk
  - Workplace burnout
  - Traumatic stress, mood and anxiety related to novel coronavirus
  - Current social unrest on racial equality
- Individuals react and experience stress differently
Burnout vs Traumatic Stress Disorders

- Rising epidemic of burnout
- Covid-19 impact on psychological well-being
- Burnout and stress disorders can negate successful resurgence efforts
Burnout and Traumatic Stress Similarities

- Burnout mimics psychiatric illness
  - energy depletion or exhaustion;
  - mental distance
  - negativism or cynicism
  - professional efficacy
  - sadness and apathy
  - frustration and irritability
- acute or post-traumatic stress signs
  - negative mood
  - efforts to avoid reminders of traumatic events
  - risky or destructive behavior
  - negative thoughts and assumptions
  - blame of self or others for causing the trauma
  - decreased interest

- poor concentration
- sleep disturbance
- mood change
- irritability or low frustration tolerance
- outburst
- depersonalization or derealization (losing sense of oneself or one’s environment, respectively)
- negative affect
- feeling isolated
- comorbidity
- problematic or inappropriate substance use
Traumatic Stress Disorders

- exposure to a traumatic event
- persistent re-experiencing of traumas in form of nightmares, flashbacks, or emotional and physical reactivity to traumatic reminders.

- Symptoms
  - hypervigilance,
  - exaggerated startle response, and
  - persistent exaggerated self-blame about events
  - depersonalization or derealization is heightened when confronted with the trauma or reminders of the events
    - people, places, conversations, activities, objects, situations
What are some action steps employers can implement?

- Mental health self-assessment tools
- Clinical screenings and referral to treatment
- Lifestyle coaching, counseling, or self-management programs
- Stress management techniques
- Explicit time for relaxation
- Flexible work hours
- Dynamic process for changing needs
- Education on burnout, traumatic stress, or mental distress
What should employers look for in regard to supporting their employees?

• Wellness group or officer
• Human Resources Department & Employee Assistance Programs
• Problem solve utilization rates
• Individualized solutions
• Positive reframe: unprecedented opportunity
• Mental health professionals
How do employers support staff?

- Safe reopening
- Ready closing
- Bring back as many people as possible
- Transparency and ongoing honest communication
- Furloughed employees and family members
- Survivor’s guilt
- Celebrate & inspire
- Positive impact
How to develop an intentional plan for helping staff cope?

- Top 5 tips (weekly)
- Clear communication (potentially visual)
- Educate and normalize
- Peer leaders, wellness ambassadors
- Vulnerable populations
- Dynamic and adaptable
- Mental health problems
Return to Workplace Checklist

Checklists

- Return to the Workplace
  Ensure all areas of your business are ready for returning employees.
  View Return Checklist
  Risk & Response Questionnaire

- Reopening Buildings
  If your building or facility was closed, shutdown or reduced in capacity, use this checklist as a guide to re-open.
  View Reopening Checklist

- Cleaning & Disinfecting
  View cleaning processes, recommendations and options as you plan to return.
  View Cleaning Guide

Templates & Posters

- Welcome Back Letter
  Prepare your employees with timelines, upcoming changes and expectations.
  View Letter Template
  View Welcome Back Packet

- Health Questionnaire
  These example health questionnaires can be used to survey employees and visitors.
  View Sample Questionnaire 1
  View Sample Questionnaire 2

- Sample Communication
  Proactively decide, enact and communicate changes and action plans regarding workers and the workplace.
  View Communication & Action Plan

- Posters
  Use these editable posters to create signage for your workplace.
  View Editable Signs

- Telehealth Template
  Use this template to easily share telehealth benefits with employees.
  View Template

- Face Masks
  Clearly communicate what face masks can or must be worn.
  View Communication
Employee Rights & Responsibilities

Pennsylvania Medical Society FAQ/Resource

- What employment laws and regulations do employers need to keep in mind during the pandemic?

- If medical practices remain open as permitted by government guidelines, what should they keep in mind regarding employee health and safety?

- Are there guidelines for a physician employer who needs to cease employment with an employee due to COVID-19?

- What are the differences between firing, furloughing, and laying off an employee?

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Find your closest treatment location

https://www.samhsa.gov/find-treatment
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1-800-273-TALK
(1-800-273-8255)

In a crisis?

Text HOME to 741741 to connect with a Crisis Counselor

Free 24/7 support at your fingertips

US and Canada: text 741741

UK: text 85258 | Ireland: text 50808

Text Us
Or message us on Facebook
Department of Labor

- Information about Wages, Hours, and Leave
- Support for Dislocated Workers and States
- https://www.dol.gov/coronavirus
CareerOneStop.org

- Sponsored by the Department of Labor
- Look-up state-specific unemployment benefits for employees
- [https://www.careeronestop.org/LocalHelp/UnemploymentBenefits/find-unemployment-benefits.aspx](https://www.careeronestop.org/LocalHelp/UnemploymentBenefits/find-unemployment-benefits.aspx)
Pennsylvania Small Business Assistance

• Apply for new COVID-19 Relief Pennsylvania Statewide Small Business Assistance program
  • grants ranging from $5,000 to $50,000 to small businesses that have been economically impacted by COVID-19
• The first application window opened June 30th and closed on July 14th.
• The second application window is expected to open in August.
• https://pabusinessgrants.com/
Other financial relief programs

- Compiled by the City of Philadelphia, the following website lists:
  - Federal Relief Programs (links to Paycheck Protection Program, Economic Injury Disaster Loans)
  - Other financial assistance
    - COVID-19 PA Hazard Pay Grant Program
    - PIDC’s Restart Philadelphia Loan Fund
    - Entrepreneur Works
    - And others
  - Utilities
  - Other Business Resources

Physical and Psychosocial Health & Well-being

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Social Unrest: Racial Equality

Mental Health: Depression, Anxiety, Trauma, Stress
References

Helpful Links

https://psychhub.com/our-partners/well-being-trust/
https://www.crisistextline.org/


Thank You

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