

Mental Health: Focusing On Health Professionals

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Mental health is an inseparable part of our health, and health-related themes have been calling the attention of population, institutions, and managers, especially in our current setting with the COVID-19 pandemic. The daily life of care practice of health professionals is full of concern, uncertainty, tension, and anguish. They have been susceptible to psychological distress as they struggle to carry out professional tasks, allied to emotional instability in the face of fear, pain, and sadness of patients. Also, there is a rising concern among researchers, teachers, and employers with issues on mental health related to work. Perspectives bring up agreement concerning the rapid growth of mental disorders and psychological distress among professionals. Therefore, articulating mental health and social and occupational is paramount.

The current issue is exploring the multi-causal phenomenon that is directly affecting many sectors in the universe of health care. This phenomenon causes damage and brings indirect implications to the quality of life of health workers, to the occupational health of institutions, to care conditions, to psychological conditions of those who offer or seek help. Based on that, it is imperative to elaborate an analysis, in a recursive and complex manner, of factors responsible for the commitment of health workers to psychological health. In this sense, the need to reflect on sociopolitical elements, working conditions, and contemporaneity issues present in the context lived by these actors emerges.

Concerning sociopolitics, it must be pointed out the importance of legitimising protective measures in mental health and in public policies, which are still fragile, directed to the population who care for more than is cared for. Work psychodynamic evidence is responsible for the mental sickness of workers. Besides that, on one hand, initiatives systematised by educational and health institutions embracing peers are scarce and insufficient to meet the demands in mental health, a scope that is affected in the professional exercise and educational process. On the other hand, it is stated worldwide, in times of the Coronavirus epidemic, an awakening for mental health acts directed to those who are at the front of the care line^(1,2).

Brazilian mental health nurses, for instance, engaged themselves in online emotional support acts to all categories within nursing throughout embracement and qualified listening to people who seek help. The aforementioned refers to the Nursing Federal Council's initiative throughout building the platform "Enfermagem Solidária" (freely translated as Solidary Nursing), which embraces the mental health demands of nursing professionals. In this endeavor, members of ABEn's Department of Psychiatric Nursing and Mental Health and of other sections of entities are engaged in offering specialised nursing care as recommended by the literature. These members are safeguarded by the professional exercise legislation in force⁽³⁾.

Working conditions sometimes contribute to the emergence of psychological pressure and psychosomatic symptoms in health professionals, such as work overload, scarce organizational support and equipment, fragile policy of positions and wages, inexistence of minimum wage of the category, increased workload, low remuneration, two employment

relationships, poor employment relationship contracts, increased liability, dealing daily with pain, suffering, and death. There is an aggravating factor in this overview, when such conditions are understood as associated with the profession or the poor context of work, making the setting banalised and naturalised. The world stressed the epidemic historical-sanitary moment, with repercussions in mental health of people in general and health workers, who feel more vulnerable.

Based on this setting, peaked statistics of depression, several anxiety syndromes, suicidal behavior, Burnout, psychotic break, excessive use of drugs and alcohol consumption, stress, and fatigue caused repercussion. All these situations show the process of suffering and sickness among health professionals, mainly in the nursing staff.

Therefore, before this context, the following question emerges: how do we keep the mental health of health workers? A recent study makes reference to analyses of different researchers concerning the process of mental sickness of professionals. The researchers courted broadening the understanding of the possible causes for this process to happen by bringing up conceptions on the relation between work and mental health, in addition to focusing

on the main practices adopted by the care and promotion of mental health to workers⁽⁴⁾.

There is an urgent need for a broad debate to face this problem, which is increasingly closer to all of us. For that, it is necessary collective participation of all the actors involved in this context. With regard to workers, it is necessary to increase their engagement in the respective class and social control entities to strengthen political participation and increase rights and working conditions. This positioning is based on the perspective that work can be a generator of health, insofar as it can provide workers with satisfaction and well-being for what they do, in addition to recognizing the suffering and mental exhaustion that the work provides. In relation to managers and employers, more qualified attention is urgently needed in the direction of formulating and implementing public policies. In this sense, as a strategy of mental health care for workers, it is suggested to map the epidemiological profile of professionals in psychological distress and with diagnoses of mental disorders to direct resources to promote mental health and the well-being of health professionals who dispense their workforce for the care of people, often beyond their means.

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