

ADVISORY FOR STATES

FOR ADDRESSING THE PSYCHOSOCIAL IMPACT OF COVID 19

SDMAs to chalk out a Plan with the Department of Health and Family Welfare and the Mental Health Authorities (if any) for gearing up/ providing psychosocial care to the people affected. The Plan should entail the following strategies:

* Clinical Psychologists or Psychiatrists have to be nominated in all hospitals at the state and district levels to ensure provision psycho-social care to the positive cases availing treatment in the hospitals as well as frontline health workers dealing with the patients.

* Clinical psychologists, psychiatric nurses, psychiatric social workers have to be briefed and deployed for providing remote counseling services to the affected community (people in quarantine and self isolation, family and friends of affected people, health professionals caring for people in isolation and quarantine, senior citizens and other vulnerable sections of the society)

*The students and teachers of the Social Work and Psychiatry departments of colleges and universities could be roped in for providing remote counseling services

* SDMAs and DDMA could identify and build a database of private doctors, nurses and counselors, psychiatric social workers who could be roped in if there is a need for more professionals

* The urban and rural community health centers have to provide remote counseling services to the community and screen people for referral to specialized psychiatric services. The human resources for the same could be drawn from Social Welfare Department (Social Workers, CDPOs etc), NGOs and Community Based Organizations, specializing in counseling services. The services of community based 'Anganwadi' and ASHA Workers could also be utilized.

* An initial training could be planned for all such counselors so that they could be readily deployed as per the plan in case of the outbreak of the disease. The regional or state level mental health institutes could provide this training.

* The SDMAs could also solicit the support and cooperation of the clergy of all faiths to disseminate messages which calm down people, deter creation of panic as well as help people to overcome resistance or hesitancy towards vaccines for Covid 19.

*All SDMAs and DDMA to issue advisories for psychosocial care pertaining to the disease which specifically deal with psychological self support

*Psychosocial Care Help-lines could be started in each SDMA/ DDMA for providing counseling services over the phone and helping to negate fake news if any circulating in the media.