**OPEN PEER REVIEW**

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As a new feature for progressing towards transparency, we decided to open a new window for all of our editors as well as authors titled "**Open Peer Review**". We hope by this new facility, our reviewers will be more motivated and authors will be more satisfied with the review process. We believe that publishing our peer review reports could make a transparent and clear environment for all our efforts within a journal, but not all reviewers tend to publish their comments.

## What is "Open Peer Review" process?

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## Advantages of "Open Peer Review" process

- More transparency, constructiveness and tactful comments of the peer review process: leads to an increase in the quality of reviews
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# Peer Review Report for "Recommendations for Improving the Mental Health of Healthcare Professionals During the COVID-19 Pandemic"

**Author(s):** Mohammad Taha Saadati Rad, Sakineh Poorhosein Fookolaee

## Review Timeline:

Submit Date: 19 Apr 2020
Revised Date: 2 May 2020
Accepted Date: 8 May 2020

Revision (0)

Here, you can see the **Reviewers**, **Associate Editors** and **EICs'** comments from the beginning to the end of the revision process.

**REFEREE**: EIC | **Revision** (0) 24 Apr 2020

Dear Author,
Thank you for submitting your manuscript for consideration for publication in the Iranian Journal of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences. We read it with great interest and are pleased to inform you that it can be considered for publication in the IJPBS. However, the English of the paper needs improvement in grammar and structure, some polishment, and careful proofreading before publication. Possibly, a native-speaker review would help on this.
Thanks.

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Revision (1)

## Reply to Reviewers

Ideally, the reviewing process can significantly improve the submitted manuscripts by allowing the authors to take into account the advice of reviewers. Author(s) must reply to all reviewers' comments in a separate Word file, point by point. A "**Reply to Reviewers**" document is submitted along with revised manuscript during submission of revised files, summarizing the changes that the authors made in response to the reviewers' comments. The responses to reviewers' comments specifies how the authors addressed each comment the reviewers made.

You can read the authors' responses to the reviewers' comments in the next page.

# Recommendations for improving the mental health of healthcare professionals during the COVID-19 pandemic

*Dear Editor,*

*In December 2019, a new coronavirus was discovered and identified as 2019-novel coronavirus in the case of viral pneumonia in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. It was then officially designed as COVID-19 by the World Health Organization (WHO). COVID-19 has spread rapidly inside and outside of Hubei province and even in another parts of the world and has caused a sharp increasing in the number of the cases among the world's population(1, 2) . According to the World Health Organization (WHO), millions of people around the world have been infected by COVID-19,It is one of the riskiest and the most dangerous situations in the world and Iran(3). In the face of this international crisis, health care workers are directly involved in the process of diagnosing, treating and caring about patients with COVID-19 and are in risk for mental distress and adverse health effects. Psychiatry disorders such as stress, depression and anxiety are on the rise, with an increasing number of confirmed and suspected cases of the disease, high work pressure, lack of protective equipment, widespread media coverage, lack of promising therapeutic agents and feelings of inadequacy, In 2003, in a study conducted during the outbreak of the SARS virus, health workers feared that they would become infected or infect their family or their friends or their colleagues(4-7). At the time before the outbreak of COVID-19, nearly 50 percent of health care workers suffered from their job stress and burnout(8). Problems of the mental health of the health care workers were a hidden and widespread problem before the outbreak of COVID-19 and became more apparent during the outbreak.*

*In the recent study on staff in the health centers in Wuhan, a significant proportion of participants had, anxiety [44.6%], symptoms of depression [50.4%], insomnia [34.0%], and*

*distress [71.5% ](9). Also, In another study on medical and nursing staff working in Wuhan, 36.9% had mental health disorders below the threshold, 34.4% had mild disorders and 22.4% had moderate disorders,and had a severe disorder of 6.2%.(10) Patient care in a situation where there is not enough beds and ventilators in the hospital wards, as well as environmental stressors such as increasing the number of patients and long work shifts and increasing the number of injured medical staff and their deaths, mental health Employees are seriously injured(11). Therefore, it is essential to decrease anxiety in the present circumstances, It is important to protect the mental health of health care workers working in the inpatient wards of COVID-19 patients.*

*Adequate rest, adequate fluid intake and proper nutrition can help to improve the physical and mental health of the health care workers(10). Some studies have shown that multidisciplinary mental health support teams, including psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, psychiatric nurses, and another mental health professionals, communicate clearly and provide an accessible and reliable psychological services such as e-books and mobile applications, as well as reduce Work shifts of the health workers less than 16 hours a day can be effective in improving the mental health of health care workers(11-14). It is recommended that these cases are a good reference for improving the mental health of the health care staff, and providing them with mental health services during the outbreak of COVID-19.*

**All highlighted items have been edited in English.*

Keywords:Mental health,COVID-19,Healthcare workers

- **Clinical Trial Registration Code:** None declared.
- **Conflict of Interests:** None.
- **Funding/Support:** There is not any funding/support.

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**Revision (1)**

Here, you can see the **Reviewers**, **Associate Editors** and **EICs'** comments from the beginning to the end of the revision process.

**REFEREE**: Reviewer | **Revision** (1) 8 May 2020

Dear AE,
In my opinion, this letter is suitable for publication. But it still needs to be edited. I did a little editing in the attached file.
Thanks.

**REFEREE**: Associate Editor | **Revision** (1) 8 May 2020

Dear EIC,
If the editing is appropriate, I agree to publish this article.
Thanks.

**REFEREE**: EIC | **Revision** (1) 8 May 2020

Dear Author,
We have completed our review of your manuscript and are pleased to inform you that it is considered for publication in the IJPBS. Note that the publication of your article will only be finalized upon your cooperation with the editorial processing.
Thank you for your fine contribution. On behalf of the Editors of IJPBS, we look forward to your continued contributions to the Journal.
Thanks.