

Review of: "Considering Cultural Diversity in Disaster Mental Health Planning and Crisis Management"

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The emphasis nationwide has been on the physical effects, with the mental impact—especially for the long-term—much less reported or studied. There has been very little concern expressed over the effects on one's mental health and on strategies to prevent stigmatization. A pandemic is much more than a medical phenomenon. It is a nationwide psychosocial impact affecting all individuals that can lead to disruption, anxiety, stress, and stigma. Consider the present two-year-long, nationwide mental health situation, which includes 42 million people who experienced COVID-19 (counting long-haulers), bereavement of 680,000 deaths, and emotional impact of people of all ages and backgrounds (some more vulnerable than others). Add to this the simultaneous worsening climatic events, a cumulative effect for many people. However, COVID-19 impacts psychological wellbeing; the result rests on an already weak system—one out of five experiencing a mental health disorder before the pandemic. To help people recover mentally from the coronavirus and become more resilient for the challenges to come, the country needs to invest significantly more in fighting the short- and long-term effects. The commitment to mental health must be equal to that for medical care. A coordinated countrywide public health plan for long-term mental health support is vital. Very important topic in these times!