



A Bilingual
NEWSLETTER
From LGBRIMH



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



With 'Dolong-the Bridge' here in its third edition, I sincerely hope the new-normal has sunk into our lives and all are in a better frame of mind and health.

Though, life is trudging back to the new normal, many more of our adaptability has been put into immense test.

Life is changing with virtuality ruling the roost. Let us all spread the word to reach the unreached, of what we have learnt in the last six months.

Let us move to have more virtual 'Dolong-the Bridge' so that we can reach out even more.

Be cautious and safe with precautions. With collective hope and efforts, 'the bridge over troubled waters' will surely hold us through this pandemic.

Dr. S. K Deuri

Covid 19 আৰু মোৰ অভিজ্ঞতা

মানৰ জীৱন বহুত ঘাট-প্ৰতিঘাটেৰে ভৰা। যান্ত্ৰিকতাৰ যুগত মানুহৰ জীৱনলৈ বহু বিপদ বিঘিনি আহিবলৈ লৈছে। মানুহ এলেহুৱা হোৱাৰ বাবে নানান তৰহৰ বেমাৰ- আজাৰে পৰিশ্ৰান্ত কৰিছে। তাতে আকৌ মানৱ সৃষ্ট বীষাণু (Virus)ৰ দ্বাৰা কোনো কোনো দেশে জৈৱিক অস্ত্ৰ তৈয়াৰ কৰিছে। এই বীষাণুৰ অন্যতম হ'ল Covid 19 Virus, যি আজি সমগ্ৰ পৃথিৱীৰ বিভিন্ন অঞ্চলত মহামাৰী হিচাবে চিহ্নিত হৈছে। আমাৰ দেশৰো লাখ লাখ মানুহ এই Virusৰ দ্বাৰা সংক্ৰমিত হৈ অকাল মৃত্যুক সাৱতি লৈছে। মইও ইয়াৰে এজন ভুক্তভোগী। সেয়েহে ইয়াৰ কিছু অভিজ্ঞতা আপোনালোকক অৱগত কৰাৰ মানসেৰে একলম লিখিব লৈছো।

যোৱা ২৭ জুলাই ২০২০ তাৰিখ সোমবাৰৰ দিনটো মোৰবাবে এটা উল্লেখযোগ্য দিন। ২৩ জুলাইত এগৰাকী ৰোগীক উন্নত চিকিৎসাৰ বাবে গুৱাহাটীলৈ লৈ গৈছিলো, কিন্তু দুৰ্ঘটনা বশত: তেওঁৰ Covid 19 +ve হোৱাৰ বাবে আমি লগত যোৱা আটাইকেইজনেই Quarantineত থাকিবলগীয়া হ'ল আৰু ৪র্থ দিনত হোৱা Rapid Antigen Testত একমাত্ৰ মোৰহে +ve হ'ল। ক্ষন্তেকৰ বাবে হলেও মনটো ভয় আৰু বিষাদেৰে ভৰি পৰিছিল। কি হ'ব নহ'ব ভাবি অন্তৰাত্মাই কান্দি উঠিছিল। যি কি নহওক চৰকাৰী স্বাস্থ্য বিধি অনুযায়ী স্বাস্থ্য বিভাগে মোৰ Isolationৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰিলে। ভাবিছিলো

ওচৰৰে কোনো Isolation Centreতে থাকিম যেতিয়া চিন্তাৰ কোনো কাৰণ নাই যিহেতু মই লক্ষণবিহীন আছিলো। কিন্তু জানিব পাৰিলো ওচৰৰ কোনো Centreতে Bedখালি নাই; গতিকে মোক তেজপুৰ চহৰৰ পৰা প্ৰায় ৬০কি.মি. দূৰৈৰ Isolation Centre লৈ নিয়া হ'ব। সেই মুহূৰ্ততেই যেন এম্বুলেঞ্চৰ পৰা ওলাই আহিম তেনে লাগিছিল। পৰিয়ালৰ আন সদস্যৰ কথা ভাবি থমকি ব'লো। মোৰ লগত Isolationৰ বাবে যোৱা আৰু তিনিগৰাকী সহযাত্ৰী আছিল কিন্তু প্ৰায় ১১/২ ঘণ্টাৰ যাত্ৰাত কাৰো লগত এষাৰো কথা পাতিবলৈ মন নগ'ল। যাত্ৰাকালত এগৰাকী ৰোগীয়ে পানী খাবলৈ বিচৰাত মোৰ হাতত থকা পানীৰ (Mineral water) বটলটো আগবঢ়াই দিলো আৰু ওভটাই লবলৈ মন নগ'ল নললো। অৱশেষত আমাৰ গন্তব্য স্থান পালোগৈ।

এম্বুলেঞ্চৰ পৰা নামিলো, সময় প্ৰায় ৭.০০, এজনো কৰ্মচাৰী দেখিবলৈ নাই। প্ৰায় ১৫-২০ মিনিট সময় ধৰি অনা বান্দৰটোৰ দৰে থিয় দি থাকিলো। আমনি লাগিছিল, উপায় নাই কি কৰিম! কোনোবা এজনে খিড়িকি এখন ঠেলি আমালৈ জুমি চালে। মই আগবাঢ়ি কিবা এষাৰ সোধাৰ মানসেৰে দুখোজ পেলাইছিলোহে, তেওঁ মোক আগবাঢ়ি নাযাবলৈ আদেশ দি পুনৰ খিড়িকি খন বন্ধ কৰি দিয়ে। এনেদৰে সময় গৈ আছে, কিন্তু আমাক ভিতৰলৈ নিবলৈ যেন কোনো আহিব বিছৰা নাই তেনে লাগিল।

প্ৰায় ১/২ ঘণ্টা পিচত এজন PPE Kit পৰিধান কৰা কৰ্মচাৰীয়ে পিঠিত যন্ত্ৰচালিত স্প্ৰে মেচিন লৈ আহি আমাক নিৰ্দিষ্ট দূৰত্ব বজায় ৰাখি শাৰী পাতিবলৈ ক'লে আৰু তেওঁক অনুসৰণ কৰিব দিলে। প্ৰায় ২০-২৫ ফুট আগবঢ়াৰ পিচত এঠাইত ৰ'বলৈ কৈ এখন খিড়িকিৰ কাষত প্লাষ্টিকৰ বাল্টিলৈ আঙুলীয়াই তাৰ পৰা এটা ল'বলৈ দিলে। যন্ত্ৰৰ দৰে তেওঁ কোৱা মতে বাল্টি এটা লৈ আকৌ তেওঁৰ পিচে-পিচে ওপৰ মহলালৈ আগবাঢ়িলোঁ। গোটেই পথছোৱা হাইপ'ক্লৰাইড স্প্ৰে কৰি বোকাময় কৰি থৈছে। নিজকে



কষ্টকৰ সিহঁতলৈ ও বেয়া লাগিল, তথাপি দূপৰীয়াৰ ভাতৰ সময়লৈকে দাস্তবিন পৰিষ্কাৰ নকৰা দেখি মোৰ বৰ খং উঠিল। ভাত দিবলৈ আহোতে কলো - "এই দূৰ্গন্ধৰ মাজত আমিবোৰে ভাত খাও কেনেকৈ? তোমালোকৰ বিৰুদ্ধে কৰ্তৃপক্ষৰ ওচৰত অভিযোগ দিব লাগিব।" এইদৰেই নটা দিন পাৰ কৰিলো RA Test -ve আছিল, দশম দিনা বিভাগীয় ভাৱে যোগান ধৰা গাড়ীৰে ঘৰমুৱা হ'লো। সেইদিনহে মনটো যথেষ্ট পাতল অনুভৱ কৰিছিলোঁ, নেদেখাজনাক মনতে ধন্যবাদ দিছিলোঁ।

শ্ৰী দিগন্ত হাজৰিকা
আবাসী,
স্বাস্থ্য প্ৰতিষ্ঠান

অপৰাধীৰ দৰে অনুভৱ হ'ল। জীৱনত এনে অভিজ্ঞতা পাম বুলি কাহানিও ভবা নাছিলো। নেদেখাজনাৰ ওচৰত কাকুতি কৰিলো- যিমান সোনকালে পাৰে মোক এই কাৰাগাৰ সদৃশ স্থানৰ পৰা সুস্থ শৰীৰে মুক্তি দিবলৈ।

দুখন বিচনাযুক্ত এটা কোঠালি দেখুৱাই তাত মোক প্ৰৱেশ কৰালে, ভিতৰ সোমাই দেখিলো এখন বিচনাত ২৬-২৭ বছৰ বয়সীয়া এজন সুঠাম যুৱক, আনখন বিচনা মোৰ বাবে। জানিব পাৰিলো যুৱক জন ITBPৰ জোৱান, অসমীয়া ল'ৰা, তেজপুৰৰে। মোক দিয়া বাল্টিটোৰ ভিতৰত এখন আঠুৱা, এখন disposable bedsheet, এটা মগ আৰু মোৰ বাবে কেইবিধমান ঔষধ। বিজুলীবাতিৰ পোহৰত কোঠাটোৰ ভিতৰত এগাল পোক-পৰুৱা, বিচনাখন নিজে ঠিক-ঠাক কৰি বাথৰুমলৈ গ'লো। ক'ভিডৰটো স্প্ৰে মাৰি বোকাময় কৰি ৰাখিছে, বাথৰুমৰ অৱস্থাও অথৈবচ। উপায় নাই, অভিযোগ দিবলৈও কোনো নাই। এইবোৰ দেখি মনটো ভাল নলাগিল। ১০ মান বজাত নিশাৰ আহাৰ খাই বিচনাত পৰিলো, নাই টোপনি অহাৰ উম-ঘামেই নাই। Phone টোলৈ চালো Battery low, Charge দিবলৈ চাৰ্জাৰ ডাল অনা নহ'ল, কি কৰো কি নকৰো এনে লাগিল। কাষৰ যুৱকজনৰ সতে কথা পাতো বুলি উঠি বহিলো, নাই তেৱো ব্যস্ত mobileত। তথাপি তেওঁক জনালো যে তেওঁৰ charger ডালতে মোৰ mobile টো charge দিব লাগিব। তেওঁ কোনো আপত্তি নকৰিলে। যা হওঁক এটা সমস্যাৰ ওৰ পৰিল। ওৰে ৰাতি উজাগৰে পাৰ কৰিলো, টোপনি নহ'ল।

আনহাতে মোৰ +ve হোৱা বাবে যোৱা ৰাতিয়েই বিভাগীয় ভাৱে আমাৰ আৱাসগৃহত বাঁহ , poster আদি বান্ধি দি মোৰ পৰিয়ালটোক গৃহবন্দী কৰি ৰখা বুলি জানিব পাৰি মৰ্মাহত হ'লো। অৱশ্যে প্ৰায়ভাগ ৰেচন সামগ্ৰী আনি খোৱা আছিল আৰু চুবুৰীয়া দুই এঘৰে কিছু খাদ্য সামগ্ৰী যোগান ধৰাৰ কথা জানিব পাৰিলো। কোনোৱে আকৌ ভয়তে সন্মুখৰ দুৱাৰ নোখোলা হ'ল বুলি শুনিলো।

পিচদিনা ৰাতিপুৱা শুই উঠিয়েই কোঠালিটো কিছু চাফ-চিকুন কৰি লোঁ। অন্য তিনিজন ৰোগীৰ সতে ক'ভিড'ৰ আৰু বাথৰুম চাফা কৰিলোঁ যিহেতু তেনে পৰিৱেশত সুস্থ মানুহৰো বেমাৰ হোৱাৰ সম্ভাৱনাহে অধিক। চাফাই কাম কৰি গাটো ধুই লোৱাৰ পিচতহে মনটো কিছু ভাল লাগিল। যদিও Covid Positive হৈছে মোৰ মনে কিন্তু মানি ল'ব পৰা নাই। Isolation Centre ত থকা কাকোৱেই ৰোগীয়েন নালাগে, সকলোৱেয়েন নিজৰ স্বাস্থ্যক লৈ সজাগ, খোজকঢ়াই খোজ কাঢ়িছে, কছৰং কৰাই কছৰং কৰিছে, কোনোৱে ম'বাইলতে ব্যস্ত, কোনোৱে কথাতেই ব্যস্ত আৰু মইও তাৰ ব্যতিক্ৰম নহ'লো। আচলতে মন দুৰ্বল হ'লে শৰীৰো দুৰ্বল হয়। এনেকৈয়ে এদিন দুদিনকৈ সময় অতিবাহিত কৰিলো।

Isolation Centre ত ৰাতিপুৱাৰ চাহ আৰু Breakfast একেলগে ৯:৩০ৰ পৰা ১০:০০ মান বজাৰ ভিতৰত দিয়ে। কল, কনী, পুৰি-তৰকাৰী, ৰঙা চাহ আৰু good-day বিস্কুট হ'ল Routine Breakfast, প্ৰত্যেক দিনা সেই একেবোৰ। দূপৰীয়াৰ আহাৰ আৰু নিশাৰ আহাৰ ক্ৰমে ২ বজাত আৰু নিশা ১০ মান বজাত দিয়ে। সপ্তাহটোত মাছ, মাংস আৰু কনী এবাৰকৈ দিয়ে বাকী নিৰামিষ। কোনো জুতি-পুতি নাই দিব লাগে দিয়ে। আমি নিজে যোগাৰ কৰি নিমখ, জলকীয়া আৰু নেমু আনি লৈছিলো।

পঞ্চম দিনাখন দেখিলো দাস্তবিনৰ পৰা দূৰ্গন্ধ ওলাইছে, জানিব পাৰিলো আগৰ দিনাৰ পৰা পেলোৱা আৱৰ্জনাৰো চাফাই কৰ্মীয়ে নিয়া নাই। breakfast দিবলৈ আহোতে সেই ল'ৰা কেইজনক সেইবোৰ নিবলৈ কলো। তৎপৰ্পূৰ্ণ কথা যে যি কেইজন (দুজন) ল'ৰাই আমাৰ খোৱা বস্তুবোৰ দিয়ে সেই একে কেইজন ল'ৰাই চাফাই কামো কৰে। কথাটো ভাবি মনটো বেয়া লাগিল, ঘিণ লাগিল। PPE কিট বহু সময় পিন্ধি থকাটো যিহেতু

EDITOR'S MESSAGE



It is now more than six months since the onset of COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the lockdowns and restrictions there is anxiety about the course of this pandemic, economic impact and the physical and mental health of the society. There is a lot of uncertainty as to when life will revert to the 'known normal' or whether this 'new normal' is here to stay. In this context, it is important to take care of one's emotional health and be informed of how others have handled, being infected with the virus.

The third edition of *Dolong- the Bridge* gives a glimpse into the experiences of a person who survived the virus and discusses the importance of taking care of the emotional self, highlighting the importance of mental health.

It has been just a few weeks since we celebrated the World Mental Health Day. We have a brief write up in English and Assamese which discusses the World Mental Health Day theme.

Take care of your mental health. Stay safe. Stay connected to people who matter and reach out to those who need your support in these trying times. We have a mountain to climb together to battle this virus and keep our society safe and secure!

Dr. Sobhana

TAKING CHARGE OF EMOTIONAL HEALTH DURING THE PANDEMIC- WHAT EVERYONE CAN DO?

We are all now familiar with the word 'Pandemic'. Pandemic refers to 'ALL PEOPLE'. This article refers to the impact of the pandemic on all people and how EVERYONE can address the emotional health during the pandemic.

The feelings during the pandemic

There are a wide range of feelings experienced by the population. The responses are very individual. In a recent meeting, the following (Photo 1) were the range of responses expressed by more than 100 participants of the general public. As you can see the predominant and frequent feelings are anxiety, fear, helplessness, frustration, painful, uncertainty, worried, exhaustion etc. In the next section, two aspects of emotional health are considered. First, how can each of us strengthen our emotional health/immunity and secondly, how we can master 'negative emotions'.

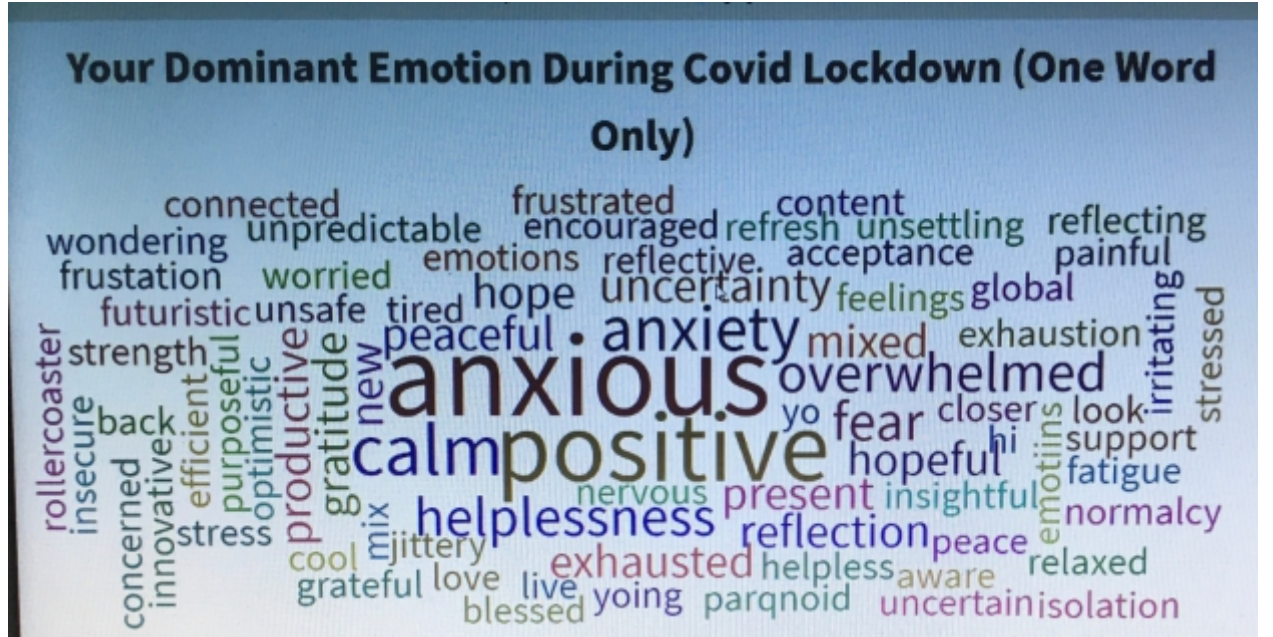


Photo 1

Gandhi's experience with Spanish Flu.

An episode 100 years back illustrates the resilience and opportunity for growth. Mahatma Gandhi, whose 151 birthday was celebrated on Oct 2nd 2020, had a brush with the 1918 Spanish Flu, in which nearly 2 crore Indians died. Interestingly (BOX1) as you can see, it was challenging to Gandhiji, but he saw it also an opportunity for personal growth.

BOX 1: Gandhiji's experience and response to Pandemic in 1918.

Mahatma Gandhi was affected by the gastric variety of flu. At Gandhi's ashram, several prominent members of the Independence Movement were laid low with flu. Gandhi was too feverish to speak or read; he couldn't shake a sense of doom: "All interest in living had ceased." Interestingly, Gandhi's reaction was: 'This protracted and first long illness in my life thus afforded me a unique opportunity to examine my principles and to test them'.

Knowledge from disaster literature

The emotional health of populations exposed to disasters is a well-recognized public health priority. World Health Report, 2001 noted: "Conflicts, including wars and civil strife, and disasters affect a large number of people and result in mental problems and such situations take a heavy toll on the mental health of the people. Between a third and half of all the affected persons suffer from mental distress.

Levels of emotional health impacts

In the current 'Pandemic' nearly all of us are affected in one or other way. The total population can be grouped under 7 levels, in terms of the emotional health needs (Box 2). We all will fall into one or more groups during the last few months and in the coming months.

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Box 2: 7 levels of Emotional Health needs of the population

- Level 1: Total population (Community)
- Level 2: People affected by the interrupted economy
- Level 3: At 'risk' population- migrants, living in slums etc
- Level 4: Persons with symptoms
- Level 5: COVID 19 -Positive patients
- Level 6: Frontline care providers
- Level 7: People with pre-existing mental disorders .

What is known to help survivors of disasters?

Interventions shown to be beneficial are at the level of individuals, families, communities and at the state (govt) levels. The central goal is to help people to not decompensate and to find meaning out of the experience. Effort should be to move individuals to think of the disaster situation as 'transition' rather than 'loss'. Psychosocial interventions directed at all the above seven levels are shown to be effective in minimising the long term impact on emotional health.

Total population level interventions are towards 'Emotional Strengthening'. The following section details EVIDENCE BASED interventions that will strengthen your emotional health and also immunity.

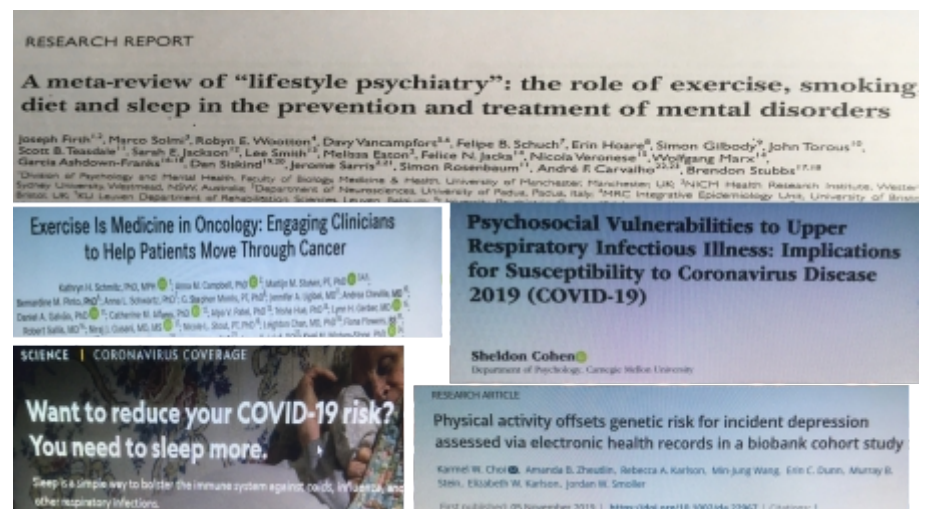


Photo 2

EVERYONE CAN PROTECT THEMSELVES

During the last 9 months of the 'Pandemic', I have been asked frequently:

“Dr.Murthy, similar to wearing a mask, washing hands and keeping physical distance to avoid infection, what can I do to maintain emotional health?”

Positive Emotional health and protection.

Here are 7 things you can make it a part of your daily life to maintain emotional health and immunity (Box 3).

BOX 3: Maintaining Emotional Health and Immunity

1. Information- avoid over exposure
2. Exercise - 30 minutes per day
3. Sleep - 8 hours per day
4. Diet- healthy and avoid intoxicants
5. Meditation and relaxation daily
6. Connectedness and Supports
7. Spirituality

There is scientific evidence to support the above 'lifestyle' changes. Three recent statements, from scientific journals, given in BOX 4 is representative of the same.

Box 4: Science of lifestyle and emotional health/ immunity

“Adults with good cardiorespiratory fitness—the ability of the circulatory and respiratory systems to supply oxygen during sustained physical activity—have half the risk of developing symptoms of depression”. (2020)

“Factors we found to be associated with greater risk of respiratory illnesses after virus exposure included smoking, ingesting an inadequate level of vitamin C, and chronic psychological stress. Those associated with decreased risk included social integration, social support, physical activity, adequate & efficient sleep, and moderate alcohol intake”. (2019)

“We have a lot of evidence that if you have an adequate amount of sleep, you definitely can help to prevent or fight any kind of infection”. (2020)

There are some activities that by making them as a part of everyone’s daily life, emotional health/immunity can be improved.

- ✔ **Knowledge:** Reading and knowing about pandemic is important. Correct and full information will allow you to make the right decisions and decrease distress. Use all the available resources(printed matter, doctors, support group etc) to acquire the needed information. However it is important to avoid overexposure.
- ✔ **Exercise and physical activity:** Physical activity/exercise has been recognized as the “miracle cure without a pill”. Being active, even when you have feelings of tiredness and fatigue is important. Develop regular habit of exercising for whatever period of time you can, ideally at least 30 minutes per day. This will help to fight fatigue, improve your appetite, lead to a better sleep. Make exercise a joint activity and where possible do it in green places.
- ✔ **Sleep:** Sleep and its benefits are known for over 2000 years. Go to bed at a particular time and wake up at a particular time. Minimise use of the phone before sleep.

- ✔ **Diet:** Healthy diet with fruits and vegetables is important. Avoid all intoxicants.
- ✔ **Relaxation/ Meditation:** Make rest/relaxation/meditation daily part of your life and gaining mastery over your emotional life.
- ✔ **Connectedness/Social support:** In all situations of stress, the more social support there are, lesser the negative effects on emotional health. Look into your life and reconnect and utilise all the supports available. Do not hesitate to seek out support from family, friends and community.
- ✔ **Spiritual support:** The pain of illness and the uncertainties of the future, demands that you find meaning to the changes and challenges in your life. Most people find solace and support from spiritual resources. This could be reading of religious texts, regular prayers, visiting place of worship, meeting a religious teacher etc. Please use whatever spiritual resources you are comfortable with.

To conclude this section, it is important to make as many of the above lifestyle activities as part of your everyday life.

DISTRESS

The second group of people who need help are those with 'distress' symptoms like fear, anxiety, irritability, fatigue, feeling of uncertainty, fear of death etc. The interventions to address 'distress' should be of higher level than the first, to maximise the coping capacity.

The next section addresses the steps that can be taken by everyone to master emotional DISTRESS during the Pandemic (BOX 5). As the Photo(3) shows it can improve immunity.

BOX 5: Measures to counter 'distress'

1. Acceptance
2. Seek assistance
3. Share your feelings
4. Journaling
5. Art / Music
6. Make pleasure time part of daily life
7. Finding the meaning

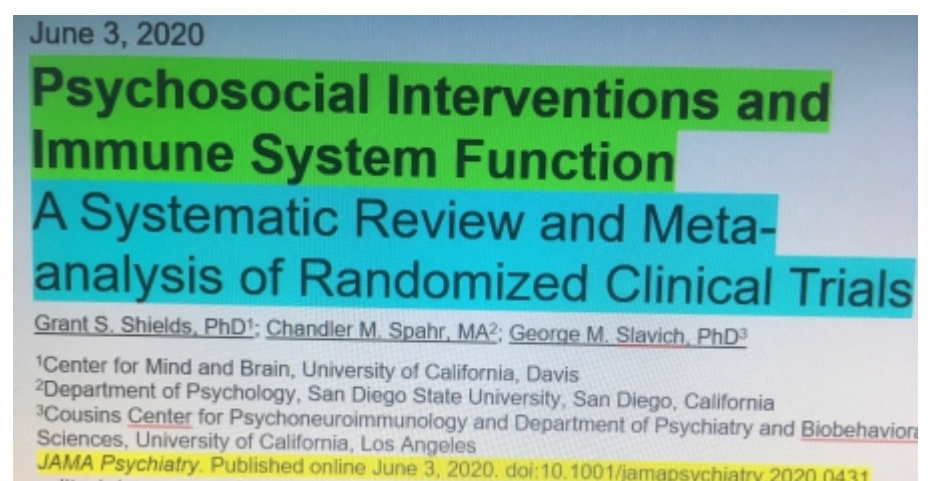


Photo 3

- ✔ **Acceptance:** Acceptance means to recognise that life is no more the same as the past and look towards living in the 'new normal'.
- ✔ **Seek assistance:** Pandemic has brought many changes in your and your family's life. You and the family require all the support you can get. Understand your needs and reach out to those who can help you. More help you receive, you will feel less burden and less burden means less tension.
- ✔ **Sharing your feelings:** Pandemic has brought about multiple changes and challenges to life of everyone. Many of these are distressing. Keeping these feelings to your own self is not good. Sharing it with others, decreases distress. Do not consider it a weakness to express helplessness. It is normal to be distressed.
- ✔ **Journaling/ Writing down your feelings:** In situations, when you cannot

share your feelings with others, writing down your feelings and thoughts for about 20 minutes daily and on a regular basis, is another way of decreasing distress and gaining mastery over your emotional life.

- ✔ **Art/Music:** These are very valuable ways of decreasing stress. Go back to those pleasurable activities that make you relaxed.
- ✔ **Daily "Happy moments":** It is important that you find ways of being happy. This could be in the form of finding time for hobbies, playing games, being with people who give you positive feelings, etc. As far as it is feasible, maintain your interests and routines. It is best to avoid thinking too far into future as it is not predictable. Alternatively focus on the present. This you can do by prioritizing areas for action, doing things according to plan and pacing of the activities. Remember, every time you complete a task you will increase your confidence and that will further increase your belief in yourself.
- ✔ **Finding Meaning:** Spirituality helps in understanding, making sense, and finding a meaning in the changed situations. Studies with people living with chronic illnesses, HIV, cancer have shown that those who use spiritual resources recover better.

When to seek professional help

The above measures will help you to master most of the changes and challenges of living with the pandemic.

However, do not hesitate to seek specialist help in the following situations:

- ✔ You want more guidance to incorporate the above psychological measures to your emotional health;
- ✔ Your emotional distress is associated with many life challenges that you cannot handle;
- ✔ Your emotional distress is interfering with daily routines (self care, eating, sleeping, work) or your treatment;
- ✔ You have continuous feelings of tension, worry, irritability sadness, crying, anger, suicidal thoughts, that is causing distress to you;

Conclusion

Pandemic is a challenge to all of us. It is for this reason everyone of us should do every thing to limit the negative impact. The same way we use handwashing, wearing mask, keeping physical distance, it is possible by the measures described in this article, to maintain emotional health as well as take care of the distress that will be experienced during this challenging period. It is within each of us to prevent negative things, master the distress and find a meaning for life from the situation.

Her waterproof mascara smudged

-Smitakhi Mahanta

They say she is independent
They say she is strong
Bold and beautiful
Curves on her body make her confident
But beneath the veil of her smile
Is where the corpse dwells
Laughing at her
Teasing the ashamed her
Making her fall apart
Broken dreams, and everything.

Tears rolling down her eyes
Her waterproof mascara smudged
Messed up hair... rolled up into a bun
The red lipstick mark on the pillow
Washed away with the rolling drops of sorrow
Misery all over again.

Her thoughts, however, were deep
So deep that it shook the world
Damaging barriers making her steal the
thunder
Rise high, so high beyond limits
Persuading the world to change in the way she
wants
She dreamt, she rose, she won.



Mental Health for All

**Greater investment-Greater Access.
Everyone, everywhere.**

World Federation for Mental Health has been observing World Mental Health Day on 10th of October each year since 1992. For this year they have selected a theme with great significance and importance: Mental Health for All, Greater investment-Greater Access. Everyone, everywhere.

The world is going through a tumultuous period because of the ongoing global health emergency due to COVID-19. As the pandemic rapidly sweeps across the world, it is inducing a considerable degree of fear, worry and concern in the population at large and among certain groups in particular, such as older adults, healthcare workers and people with underlying health conditions. In public health terms, the main psychological impact to date is elevated rates of stress and anxiety. The enforcement of new necessary measures such as quarantine and lockdown have interfered with the normal or usual lifestyle of the populace by restrictions in daily activities, occupational status and even access to healthcare itself. Consequent to this, levels of loneliness, fear, depression, harmful use of drugs, and self-harm or suicidal behaviour are also increasing as the human race struggles to bring the virus under control and to find solutions.

The current pandemic appeared on the backdrop of an already stressed mental health landscape that saw mental health conditions on the rise across the globe. There is a substantial gap between the burden caused by mental disorders and the resources available to prevent and treat them. It is estimated that four out of five people with serious mental disorders living in low and middle-income countries do not receive mental health services they need. Globally, spending on mental health is less than two US dollars per person, per year and less than 25 cents in low-income countries. Only 36% of people living in low-income countries are covered by any mental health legislation (WHO's Mental Health Atlas, 2011). One person in every four is affected by a mental disorder at some stage of their lives. Mental, neurological and substance use disorders exact a high toll on health outcomes, accounting for 13% of the total global burden of disease (WHO, 2012). Every 40 seconds someone dies by suicide (WHO, 2018). For every suicide, there are many more who attempt suicide every year. Every suicide is a tragedy that affects families, communities and has long-lasting and devastating effects on the people left behind. The World Economic Forum (2018) noted that mental health disorders are on the rise in every country in the world and could cost the global economy up to \$16 trillion between 2010 and 2030 if the collective failure to respond is not addressed.

We are now facing a Global mental health emergency. This has been compounded manifold by the need for psychosocial support and mental health interventions during this pandemic. This bleak picture necessitates that we must ensure that mental health is prioritized now more than ever.

This ongoing pandemic has forced us to rethink our strategies and it has become clear that under the current global health emergency no-one should be denied mental health care. Mental health is a human right – it is high time that mental health services are made available for all- for everyone, everywhere. This commitment will be strengthened through alliances, collaborations and partnerships to ensure that investment in mental health is prioritized. There is an urgent need for a bigger investment in mental health particularly during this global health emergency and thereafter.

Aptly, for this year's World Mental Health Day, the WHO, together with its partner organizations, United for Global Mental Health and World Federation for Mental Health, is calling for a massive upscaling in investment in mental health. The World Mental Health Day campaign will offer opportunities, primarily online, given the continuing pandemic, for all of us to do something life-affirming, as individuals or as a group towards attempting to make access to mental health care services a reality for everyone.

সকলোৰে বাবে মানসিক স্বাস্থ্য

**“বেছিকৈ বিনিয়োগ -বেছিকৈ সহজলভ্য,
সকলোৰে বাবে, সকলোতে”**

বিশ্ব মানসিক স্বাস্থ্য মহাসংঘই ১৯৯২ চনৰ পৰা প্রতিটো বছৰৰ ১০ অক্টোবৰ দিনা বিশ্ব মানসিক স্বাস্থ্য দিৱস উদযাপন কৰি আহিছে। এই বছৰো তেওঁলোকে এক গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ বিষয়বস্তুক বাছনি কৰিছে: সকলোৰে বাবে মানসিক স্বাস্থ্য, বেছিকৈ বিনিয়োগ- বেছিকৈ সহজলভ্য, সকলোৰে বাবে, সকলোতে।

কভিড-১৯ ৰ এই সৰ্বব্যাপী মহামাৰীৰ সময়ত গোটেই বিশ্ব এক অনিশ্চিত পৰিস্থিতিৰ সন্মুখীন হৈছে। যি ধৰণে এই মহামাৰী সৰ্বব্যাপী হৈ পৰিছে, ই সৰ্বসাধাৰণ মানুহৰ মাজত বহুখিনি ভয়, শংকা আৰু দুচিন্তাৰ কাৰণ হৈছে। আটাইটকৈ বেছিকৈ ই প্ৰভাৱিত কৰিছে বয়োজ্যেষ্ঠ সকলক, চিকিৎসা সেৱাত কৰ্মৰত সকলক আৰু সেই সকল লোকক যি আগৰে পৰাই ৰোগাক্ৰান্ত। প্ৰথমৰহাত সৰ্বসাধাৰণৰ মাজত উৎকণ্ঠা আৰু মানসিক চাপ দেখা গৈছিল, কিন্তু লকডাউন আৰু কোৱাৰেণ্টিন আদি পদক্ষেপৰ ফলত সৰ্বসাধাৰণ ৰাইজ বহুখিনি অসুবিধাৰ সন্মুখীন হ'ল, যেনে দৈনন্দিন কামকাজ, জীৱিকা উপাৰ্জন আৰু চিকিৎসা সেৱা লোৱা আদি। যি সময়ত মানৱ জাতি এই ভাইৰাছটোক নিয়ন্ত্ৰিত কৰি সমাধান উলিওৱাত ব্যস্ত তেনে সময়তে প্ৰতিকূল পৰিস্থিতিৰ ফলত বহুলোক সংগহীনতা, ভয়, হতাশা, বিষন্নতা, মাদক দ্ৰব্য সেৱন আৰু আত্মহত্যাৰ প্ৰৱণতা আদিৰ সন্মুখীন হৈছে।

এই সৰ্বব্যাপী মহামাৰী এনে সময়ত দেখা দিছে যি সময়ত গোটেই বিশ্বত মানসিক স্বাস্থ্যজনিত ৰোগৰ সংখ্যা বৃদ্ধি পাই আহিছে। বৰ্তমান অৱস্থাত মানসিক ৰোগৰ বোজা আৰু ইয়াক প্ৰতিহত আৰু চিকিৎসা কৰিবলৈ যিখিনি সম্পদৰ প্ৰয়োজন হৈছে তাৰ মাজত আছে ভীষণ ব্যৱধান। পৰিসংখ্যাৰ পৰা দেখা গৈছে যে নিম্ন আৰু মধ্য আয়ৰ দেশবোৰত যিখিনি ৰোগীৰ গভীৰ মানসিক ৰোগত আক্ৰান্ত হয়, তাৰ পাঁচজনৰ মাজত চাৰিজনই উপযুক্ত চিকিৎসা সেৱা নাপায়। বিশ্বজুৰি, প্ৰতিবছৰত প্ৰতি ব্যক্তিৰ নামত গড়ে ১৫০ টকাতকৈও কম টকা ধাৰ্য হয়, নিম্ন আয়ৰ দেশত ই দুটকাতকৈও কম। বিশ্ব স্বাস্থ্য সংস্থাৰ ২০১১ৰ মতে দৰিদ্ৰ সীমাৰেখাৰ মাত্ৰ ৩৬% নিম্ন আয়ৰ লোকৰ ক্ষেত্ৰতহে মানসিক স্বাস্থ্য আইন প্ৰযোজ্য হৈছে। চাৰিজন মানুহৰ মাজত এজনে জীৱনৰ যিকোনো সময়ত মানসিক ৰোগত ভোগে। বিশ্বজুৰি ১৩% ৰোগ মানসিক, স্নায়ুজনীত বা মাদক দ্ৰব্য সেৱনৰ ফলত হয়। প্ৰতি ৪০ চেকেণ্ডত এজন ব্যক্তিয়ে আত্মহত্যাৰ ফলত প্ৰাণ হেৰুৱাই। ইয়াৰ লগতে বহুলোকে আত্মহত্যাৰ অসফল প্ৰচেষ্টাও চলায়। আত্মহত্যা অতি মৰ্মান্তিক। ই এৰি থৈ যোৱা সকলক, পৰিয়ালৰ লোকক, আৰু গোটেই সমুদায়টোক সুদীৰ্ঘকালৰ কাৰণে সৰ্বনাশ কৰি যায়। বিশ্ব আৰ্থিক মঞ্চ (২০১৮) ৰ মতে বিশ্বৰ প্ৰতিখন দেশতে মানসিক ৰোগৰ প্ৰাদুৰ্ভাৱ বৃদ্ধি হোৱা পৰিলক্ষিত হৈছে আৰু ইয়াৰ ফলত ২০১০ আৰু ২০৩০ চনৰ ভিতৰত বিশ্বৰ অৰ্থনীতি ক ১৬ ট্ৰিলিয়ন ডলাৰ ব্যয় হ'ব।

বৰ্তমান সময়ত আমি মানসিক স্বাস্থ্যৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত এক আপাতকালীন পৰিস্থিতিৰ সন্মুখীন হৈছো। ক'ৰণা মহামাৰীয়ে ইয়াত কেইবাগুণেও আৰু ভয়াৱৰ কৰি তুলিছে। বহুলোকক মনোসামাজিক সহায় আৰু মানসিক স্বাস্থ্যজনীত হস্তক্ষেপৰো দৰকাৰ হৈছে। এনে এক ধুসৰিত ভৱিষ্যতৰ সময়ত ই অতিকৈ প্ৰয়োজনীয় হৈ পৰিছে যে আমি মানসিক স্বাস্থ্যক প্ৰাধান্যতা দিওঁ।

এই মহামাৰীয়ে আমাৰ ৰণনীতিৰ পুনৰ্বিচাৰ কৰিবলৈ বাধ্য কৰিছে আৰু ই অতি স্পষ্ট হৈ পৰিছে মানসিক স্বাস্থ্যসেৱাৰ পৰা কোনো লোককে বিমুখ কৰিব নোৱাৰি। মানসিক স্বাস্থ্য এক মানৱাধিকাৰ আৰু ইয়াক সকলোৰে বাবে সহজলভ্য কৰি তুলিব লাগে। আমাৰ এই প্ৰতিবদ্ধতা তেতিয়াহে শক্তিশালী হ'ব যেতিয়া সকলোৰে সহযোগীতাত মানসিক স্বাস্থ্যত বিনিয়োগে প্ৰাধান্যতা পাব। এই মহামাৰীৰ সময়ত এই বিনিয়োগত আৰু বৃদ্ধি কৰিবৰ প্ৰয়োজন আহি পৰিছে।

Dr. Angshuman Kalita
Assistant Professor
Department of Psychiatry
LGBRIMH, Tezpur



LGBRIMH 24 * 7 HELPLINE for Psychosocial Support during COVID 19 Pandemic

- The 24 * 7 HELPLINE for Psychosocial support during COVID 19 pandemic was initiated under the mandate of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) with NIMHANS as the Coordinating agency.
- Initially, NIMHANS (Bengaluru), LGBRIMH (Tezpur) and CIP (Ranchi) collaborated and started the Helpline with the number 08046110007. Later, many other organizations also joined the services.
- From LGBRIMH, a total of 9 phone numbers were provided to receive calls in three languages (Assamese, Hindi and English). Volunteers took turns to attend the calls and help the caller.
- The IVRS system was based in Bengaluru and was coordinated by NIMHANS.

VIJAY GOGOI Digitally signed
by VIJAY GOGOI
Date: 2020.09.17
10:32:44 +05'30'

Dr Vijay Gogoi
Nodal Officer, Helpline
Associate Professor, Psychiatry

The New Normal..... we continue to serve

In order to ensure continued mental health services and training during this ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic LGBRIMH carried out activities and services and put in place a protocol to reduce the impact of the pandemic on our services.

Various steps taken to minimize the impact of COVID-19 :

CENTRAL LABORATORY

Various awareness programmes were organised regarding COVID-19, Disinfection and rationale use of PPE among General Staff, Patient, Patient attendant, Security Staff and Cleaning Staff.

Steps taken by the institute to contain the transmission of COVID-19 :

- Introduction of hand washing facilities outside all entry gates.
- Spacing lines to ensure physical distance.
- Implementation and display of COVID appropriate behaviors in all areas.
- Introduction of screening desk for early identification of suspected case of COVID19.
- Spacing of OPD chairs to increase physical distancing.
- Increase in number of exit gates and pharmacy counters to minimize queue.
- Preparation of an isolated zone for detail screening and referral to IDSP for the suspected patients.
- Ensuring Health workers deliver their duties wearing PPE kit.
- Preparation of an isolated zone to accommodate the suspected patient.
- IEC displays to increase awareness regarding COVID19.
- Awareness sessions to educate staff, patients and their caregivers on COVID19.
- Frequent sanitisation of the wards.

ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTS

All academic meetings and classes are made online. Online webinars/ workshops and other innovative programmes are also carried out by the academic/ clinical departments. The trainees of Departments of Psychiatric Nursing, Clinical Psychology and Psychiatric Social Work provided 24/7 Telephonic Psychosocial Support during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Activities of the Departments

Psychiatry

- Providing information to patients and their care givers about basic protective measures against Novel Corona Virus (COVID-19). These include – how to maintain hand hygiene, how to practice respiratory hygiene, how to maintain social distance, avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth, how to wear mask or face cover, when and where to seek medical care and how to stay informed.
- Regular information to patients and their caregivers about the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 infection.
- Tele-medicine services for patients. For the last 2months, patients and their caregivers are availing this opportunity from the institute.
- On 7th April, 2020 the department organized an Online Academic Discussion on the topic QTc Interval: Psychotropics and COVID-19 Medication.
- With the help of hospital management authority, the department is running special OPD for those patients who are coming from COVID-19 hotspot areas.

Psychiatric Social Work

- Dr.Sobhana H was nominated as a representative of LGBRIMH to the National COVID-19 Task Force. She attended a meeting on finalising the draft of Psychosocial Action Plan for COVID-19 response on 6th May 2020 organised by NIMHANS Bengaluru.
- Dr. Sobhana H was a Panellist for the Virtual Consultation on Pathfinding New Facet in Field Work Training on 08-05-2020 organised by Department of Social Work, Kristujayanti College, Bengaluru.
- On 3rd June, 2020 the Department initiated Phone-in Follow-up Services for the registered patients of LGBRIMH. The services aim at assessment of current psychiatric status of the persons with mental illness, their biological and social functioning and provision of brief psychosocial intervention when indicated. The phone-in follow-up service also provides telemedicine helpline for those who are not aware of these services and also provide COVID awareness and precautions to be followed.
- Dr. Sonia P Deuri was panellist for e-FDP – Importance of Cross Disciplinary research in the post COVID-19 scenario: Social Perspectives, organised by Royal Global University, Guwahati on 22-06-2020. She presented a paper on 'Social Realm in Mental Health: Have we finally arrived'
- Dr. Sonia P Deuri was the reviewer of Guidelines for Tele-Psychiatry Social Work Practice published by Department of Psychiatric Social Work, NIMHANS, Bengaluru.
- Faculty, PSWs and trainees of the Department attended the release of Guidelines for Tele-Psychiatry Social Work Practice published by Department of Psychiatric Social Work, NIMHANS, Bengaluru.
- The Department organized the following webinars and web-based workshops:

- » Basic Skills Training for Project Staff of Conflict Management and Peace Education to Children and Adolescents of NE India from 18th to 20th August 2020- Coordinators- Dr. Sobhana H and Joint Coordinators- Ms. Sabana N Islam and Ms. Marinella Humtsoe
- » Awareness Program for Parents on Prevention of Drug Addiction on 2nd October 2020- Coordinator- Dr. I Banerjee and Ms. Buli Nag Daimari
- » Mental Health Disorders and Stigma for Community Volunteers of SATRA, Sipajhar on 6th and 7th October 2020 - Coordinator Dr. Sobhana H and Joint Coordinators- Ms. Sabana N Islam and Ms. Marinella Humtsoe
- » Adjustment and Adaptation of Children and Adolescents during and Post COVID-19 for the School administrators and teachers- Coordinator- Dr. I Banerjee
- » Two Days National Seminar on Suicide Prevention during COVID- 19 on 10th and 11th September 2020. Convenor- Dr. Arif Ali and Co-Convenors- Ms. Buli Nag Daimari and Ms. Rituporna Dhar

Clinical Psychology

- ⊙ In the backdrop of COVID-19, virtual hub adda was arranged for all the trainees, staff and faculties of the Department to strengthen the 'WE' feeling. Free flowing adda, regarding, how the participants are spending their days amidst uncertainty was quite stress relieving.
- ⊙ **WESoulated** : An adda Online was organised mostly to have a check on others in the difficult time in our institute. The intention behind was to reflect on that we are not isolated, rather we are together on the same boat to sail through the crisis. The focus of the gathering was to talk about small and big things participants are doing to keep themselves well.
- ⊙ **QUARANTImEs**: A mental health support e-poster campaign for youth, an initiative was taken to reach out to the youth(EVERY BUDDY) in the period of lockdown on a virtual platform. HUB wished to know two things from the buddies, 1. What all big/tiny things they are doing to keep themselves well? 2. How all those activities are helping them to support them in their wellness?
- ⊙ **QuarantQuotes**: A mental health support mini-documentary campaign for youth: 3 mini-documentaries created wherein 3 youth shared their wellness messages through 'quotes'. Posts reached to 780 people on social media on average.
- ⊙ Online Book Clubs are being held regularly with the key idea of participants, who ranged from children to older adults, to explore safe spaces through illustrated story books for children and getting engaged in fun yet meaningful activities on a virtual platform. Books read and reflected upon: How to be a Lion by Ed Vere, Perfectly Norman by Tom Percival and The Heart and the Bottle by Oliver Jeffers and Something Else by Kathryn Cave
- ⊙ On 25th June, Tele-Psychotherapy Services for pre registered clients of LGBRIMH commenced through secure video conferencing.
- ⊙ Awareness talk on causes, effects & prevention of substance use disorder on the occasion of International Day against Drug Abuse & Illicit Trafficking by Mr. Deepshri Phukan was organised and dissemination was done by District Legal Services Authority, Sonitpur.
- ⊙ International Day of Older Persons on the theme 'Pandemics: do they change how we address age and ageing' was observed on 1st Oct 2020. A webinar was organized on this day.

Psychiatric Nursing

- ⊙ Online training program for institute staff nurses on 30th & 31st March 2020 on the topics: COVID-19 Introduction and Basic Concepts and Infection Control Measures during COVID-19 Pandemic.
- ⊙ Online training program for institute staff nurses on 1st to 18th

April on the topics: Infection Prevention & control when COVID-19 suspected case, Use of PPE-Donning & Doffing, Nursing care of COVID-19 Patient, Managing psychiatric emergencies during COVID-19, Stress management of COVID-19 Patients and family members.

- ⊙ Online training program for institute staff nurses on 26th May 2020 on Bio-Medical Waste Management by Mrs. Thresiamma M. F. Chetry, Asst. Matron, LGBRIMH.
- ⊙ A training program on Importance of hand hygiene & techniques for the Cleaner Staff on 2nd June 2020 by Mrs. Esther George.
- ⊙ Online training program for institute staff nurses on 8th June 2020 on Importance of Hand Hygiene by Mrs. Esther K George, Ward In-charge, LGBRIMH.
- ⊙ Online training program for institute staff nurses 9th June 2020 on Universal Safety Precautions with special reference to COVID preparedness by Mrs. Chitra Bora, Nursing Tutor, LGBRIMH.
- ⊙ Training programmes on Universal safety precaution with special reference to COVID preparedness for the Keeper Staff on 24th and 26th June 2020 by Mrs. Chitra Bora, Nursing Tutor & Ms. Deepshikha Boruah, Staff Nurse.
- ⊙ Training program for the cleaner staff on 30th June 2020 on Universal Safety Precautions with special reference to COVID preparedness by Mrs. Chitra Bora, Nursing Tutor & Ms. Deepshikha Boruah, Staff Nurse.
- ⊙ Webinar on "COVID-19 PANDEMIC: Mental Health Perspectives" was organized on 10th July 2020. Coordinators- Dr. Arunjyoti Baruah and Dr. Nurnahar Ahmed
- ⊙ E- Seminar on "Promoting Mental Health: During and post pandemic" was organized on 30th July 2020. Coordinators- Dr. Arunjyoti Baruah and Mr. Sandeep Kollipara.
- ⊙ Training programme on Rational use of PPE for the Nursing Staff on 7th July by Mrs. Chitra Bora, Nursing Tutor & Ms. Rashmita Devi, Staff Nurse.
- ⊙ Training programmes on Donning and Doffing of PPE for the Nursing Staff on 8th July 2020 by Mrs. Chitra Bora, Nursing Tutor & Ms. Rashmita Devi, Staff Nurse.
- ⊙ A class on "Handling and Segregation of BMW was conducted. The class was about the meaning of BMW, how to segregate according to colour code, how to handle, use of PPE, importance of timely vaccination, health check-up of the staff, then transportation, pre-treatment of waste and how to store and dispose of BMW.
- ⊙ A training programme on "Disinfection and Disposal of PPE" was conducted by Mrs. Thresiamma M. F. Chetry on 6th August 2020 for the Cleaner Staff. The session discussed about protocol for various rational use of PPE, disinfection and safe disposal of PPE.
- ⊙ A training programme was organized on "Disinfection and Safe disposal of PPE" by Mrs. Thresiamma M. F. Chetry on 25th September for the Nursing Staff.
- ⊙ Dr. Arunjyoti Baruah shared the experience on "Telehelpline services at LGBRIMH during COVID-19" in a webinar organized by Indian Nursing Council in collaboration with ISPN India on 10th October 2020.

Centre for Rehabilitation Sciences

- ⊙ Celebrated the World Day for Deaf on 27th September 2020 by organizing a therapeutic session and awareness program on early identification and intervention for hearing impairment with parents of children with auditory and speech impairment. Mr. Vivek Sarmah coordinated this program.
- ⊙ A webinar on Make Your Mark- Educating and Creating Awareness among Caregivers and Parents of Cerebral Palsy Children on 7th October 2020. Coordinators- Mr. Utpal Borah, Mr. Gautam Kumar Nath, Ms. Shyamolee Borah, Mr. Vivek Sarmah and Mr. Ashique Akhtar Ahmed

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