

දුරකථන) 011 2669192 , 011 2675011
தொலைபேசி) 011 2698507 , 011
2694033
Telephone) 011 2675449 , 011 2675280

ෆැක්ස්) 011 2693866
பெக்ஸ்) 011 2693869
Fax) 011 2692913

විද්‍යුත් තැපෑ,) postmaster@health.gov.lk
மின்னஞ்சல் முகவரி)
e-mail)

වෙබ් අඩවිය) www.health.gov.lk
இணையத்தளம்)



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சுவசிரிபாய

SUWASIRIPAYA

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My No.) DMH/D/08/2020

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Date) 23.03.2020

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சுகாதார மற்றும் சுதேச வைத்திய சேவைகள் அமைச்சு
Ministry of Health & Indigenous Medical Services

DDG, NHSL/National Hospital, Kandy
All Provincial Health Secretaries
All Provincial Directors of Health Services
All Regional Directors of Health Services
All Directors of TH, PGH, DGH
All Medical Superintendents of Base Hospitals
All Heads of Health Care Institutions
All Consultant Psychiatrists

Instructions for Mental Health professionals in the wake of COVID-19 crisis in the country

Sri Lanka is facing an outbreak due to COVID-19 at present and the Government is taking stringent measures to control it. Persons with disability are most vulnerable and persons with mental disorders are no exception. The following measures are recommended to support the persons with mental health needs;

1. Psychiatric clinics in hospitals:
Ensure continuity of treatment by prescribing medicines whenever possible for two months. Patients may request to see the Consultant Psychiatrist/Medical Officers to seek help if they have any pressing issues in between clinics. Provide them with a telephone number giving instructions.
2. In-ward patients:
They will be seen by the Consultant Psychiatrist and Medical Officers as is the routine.
3. Outreach psychiatric clinics:
As much as possible conduct the clinics every two months and prescribe medicines for two months. Provide them with a telephone number of a relevant officer and the mental health hotline (1926) in case they need any assistance between two clinic sessions.
4. Mental Health Team:
Liaise with the respective hospital Director or RDHS to ensure uninterrupted supply of psychiatric drugs.

5. Out Patient Departments:

Continue medications by repeating the prescription if patients already on treatment present to you so that, they can get the medications from the out door pharmacy of the hospital. Please give necessary instructions regarding this to Medical Officers at OPD and Pharmacists/Dispensers in your hospital. Provide the telephone number of the Consultant Psychiatrist/Medical Officer (Mental Health/Psychiatry) to OPD doctors and Pharmacists/Dispensers for any clarification.

6. Private practitioners:

Continue medications by repeating the prescription if patients already on treatment present to you so that, they can purchase from Osusala/pharmacies. Disseminate this message among Medical Officers in your hospital. Provide a telephone number of a Consultant Psychiatrist/Medical Officer (Mental Health/Psychiatry) to private practitioners and hospital staff for any clarification.

7. Transfer of persons with mental disorders to National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH):

As the NIMH is not a screening/treatment center for suspected COVID-19, do not transfer persons with mental disorders having fever to NIMH. Before transferring patients to NIMH always make prior communication with the relevant Consultant Psychiatrist and/or Director, NIMH.


8. Treatment of COVID 19:

Ensure that all persons with mental disorders with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 are cared for as any other patient. Refer to the latest guidelines on "Guidance on the rational use of personal protective equipment (PPE) in hospitals in the context of COVID-19 disease" issued by the Epidemiology Unit, Ministry of Health & Indigenous Medical Services.

For any clarification, contact:

Consultant Psychiatrists, Dr. Prabath Wickrama (0718353884), Dr Sajeewana Amarasinghe (0777744949) or Dr. Chathurie Suraweera (0773694166)

Dr Rohan Ratnayake, Director (Actg.)/Mental Health, (0714204247; for administrative issues)


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Dr. Anil Jasinghe
Director General of Health Services
Ministry of Health and Indigenous Medical Services

Dr. Anil Jasinghe
Director General of Health Services
Ministry of Health & Indigenous Medicine Services
"Suwasiripaya"
385, Rev. Baddegama Wimalawansa Thero Mawatha,
Colombo 10.

Cc: Secretary/Health

Addl. Secretary (Public Health)

DDG/NCD

DDG/MS

DDG/PHS

Director/Mental Health

Director/E & OH

MO/MH (FP)

College of Psychiatrists