

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE LIVES OF NURSING PROFESSIONALS: INTEGRATIVE REVIEW

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Abstract: **Goal:**To identify psychic impairments suffered by nursing professionals as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. **Method:** This study was conducted by an integrative review survey. To carry out the research, the databases of the Virtual Health Library were used, integrating the Latin American and Caribbean Literature on Health Sciences (LILACS), Nursing Database (BDENF) and Digital Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO). **Result:**The spread of COVID-19 on a global scale has generated impacts around the world, saturating health systems and bringing unprecedented changes in the field of work. As a result, the possible effects on the mental health of the professional are noted, especially those who work on the front line to combat the pandemic, facing daily pressures and the stigmas of the profession. However, the psychological damages for this population are capable of transcending the current moment, being able to generate traumas with medium and long-term duration and as these have provided psychological damages to health professionals even after they leave the work environment. Currently, among health professionals, there is a significant increase in depressive disorders, anxiety, post-traumatic stress, acute stress and Burnout syndrome. **Conclusion:**It is important that in institutions that train health professionals, there are disciplines that address the topic, so that the future professional is already prepared in case a situation like the one we are experiencing occurs. And that hospitals create programs for psychological monitoring of their employees who worked on the front line, and that governments and their health areas create campaigns aimed at promoting improvement in the quality of life of these professionals. **Keywords:** Covid-19, Mental health, Impact on nursing.

INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 (SARS-CoV-2) pandemic is a potentially fatal disease and in the last 100 years it represents an important global public health problem. The SARS-CoV-2 pandemic started in the city of Wuhan, central China, related to transmission in a seafood and live animal market, spreading to China and Asia and the rest of the world in just two months (ROTHAN; BYRAREDDY, 2020). Healthcare professionals are particularly susceptible to infection. In Brazil, as in other countries, thousands of health professionals were removed from their professional activities because they acquired the infection and many died as a result of COVID-19 (LANCET, 2020; SÃO PAULO, 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic is taking a huge toll on individuals, families, communities and societies around the world. Everyday life has changed profoundly, the economy has entered a recession and many of the traditional social, economic and public health safety nets that people rely on in difficult times have been subjected to unprecedented pressures (WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION, 2020).

Health professionals, working tirelessly on the front line, are more vulnerable to emotional issues, as they also deal with their feelings of impotence, failure, stress due to work conditions and overload, uncertainties about the disease and treatment, fear of contracting and transmitting the virus and/or difficulty in dealing with losses from their patients. Also related are family members accompanying patients, their losses and the entire unstable context of a pandemic (XIANG, 2020).

The World Health Organization (WHO) notes that nursing workers pressured by this situation have high levels of anxiety, plus the risk of becoming ill, causing severe mental health problems and increasing cases of

Burnout Syndrome, in addition to generating anxiety, depression and associated stress (WHO, 2020).

The present research aims to discuss, based on a bibliographic analysis, about the mental health of nurses as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as to identify psychic impairments suffered by these professionals and, also, some of the possible actions to avoid mental illness of these professionals.

To identify psychic impairments suffered by nursing professionals as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted by an integrative review research, carried out in four stages: study goal, definition of inclusion and exclusion criteria of scientific productions; search for scientific studies in databases and virtual libraries; analysis and categorization of the productions found; results and discussion of findings.

To carry out the research, the databases of the Virtual Health Library were used, integrating the Latin American and Caribbean Literature on Health Sciences (LILACS), Nursing Database (BDENF) and Digital Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO).

The operationalization and the search strategy were based on the combination of the Boolean operators AND and OR, performing the search together and individually so that possible differences could be corrected. The following Health Sciences Descriptors (DECs) were used: "Covid-19" AND "Mental health" AND "Impact on nursing", which were registered in the Health Sciences Descriptors portal (DeCS).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The spread of COVID-19 on a global scale has generated impacts around the world,

saturating health systems and bringing unprecedented changes in the field of work. As a result, the possible effects on the mental health of the worker are noted, especially those who work on the front line to combat the pandemic, facing daily pressures and the stigmas of the profession. However, the psychological damages for this population are capable of transcending the current moment, being able to generate traumas with medium and long term duration; as Ornell et al. (2020), based on data from previous respiratory outbreaks such as the SARS of 2003 and the MERS of 2015 and how these provided psychological damage to health professionals even after they left the work environment.

According to Barbosa, Gomes and Souza (2020) highlight that nurses deal with the implementation of protocols and surveillance measures established by the Ministry of Health (MH), related to the pandemic, in order to reduce contagion throughout the territory to care. at the bedside, 24 hours a day, aiming at the client's well-being; however, it is not new that health care presents several challenges to the nursing professional, from the routine of tiring hours to the need for a quick response to the client's need situations to the interpersonal relationships with the team, client and family. Along with the usual challenges, the new pandemic brought many uncertainties, risks and fears to professionals. It is difficult to work in the face of such an unknown scenario, so full of doubts, from transmission, treatment, use of PPE's,

Even in the face of so many challenges, there was no shortage of professionals who honor the oath made in their graduation ritual, they put themselves at the service of caring for the population in front of a scenario never imagined. Despite the fears, they remained firm on the front line, working in the search for the recovery of those who needed care in a reality that had not been projected until

recently.

No country was fully prepared to face Covid-19, not even foreseeing the proportion it would take. Remember Florence Nightingale, a precursor of modern nursing, also known for organizing her theory amidst the war scenario, with time and the advance of immediate medicine, the preparation for war scenarios fell into the background, perhaps imagining what scenarios similar would never be faced.

According to Riboli, Arthur and Mantovani (2020), the training of nurses in Brazil does not address disciplines that directly support care in situations like this. On the other hand, major epidemics are studied out of curiosity, but the idea that a pandemic could happen seems, or seemed, very unlikely, and this deficit that comes from training can be felt in the heavy and exhaustive routine of coping with Covid. -19. The health professional is prepared to recover lives, evolve with improvements, but with each working day, new deaths were faced, new questions arose about efficiency and their performance and about how long that would be the daily routine, and perhaps one of the biggest questions was about how long he would be the caregiver and not the person who needs the care.

The routine of shifts with patients affected by Covid-19 can be assumed as a war, the difference is that the enemy cannot be seen, cannot be touched, there are no effectively recognized weapons for combat. What is known is that it can cause damage and even death to those who are affected by it. At the same time, nursing is composed of a large number of professionals.

It is understood that, as pointed out by Lu et al. (2020), health professionals, when experiencing up close the scarcity of equipment, frustration with the results and the lack of control of the pandemic, manifest a greater tendency to mental suffering, a fact

that is observed in their own research, in which the medical team presented an anxiety level 14.2% higher than the administrative class, although these data do not negate the need to think about the psychic health of other working classes who, in their own way, face the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, we emphasize the possibility that most of the measures and strategies listed here can be adapted and directed to workers from other sectors, with room for the development of new procedures.

Currently, among health professionals, there is a significant increase in depressive and anxiety disorders, post-traumatic stress, acute stress and Burnout syndrome. This psychic suffering is mostly caused by strenuous routines, a scenario of uncertainty, risk of contamination, fear of transmission to the family, among other factors that generate illness (HO et al., 2020; HUANG, J. et al., 2020; OLIVEIRA et al., 2020; ORNELL et al., 2020; SUN et al., 2020; WU; WEI, 2020). In view of this situation, the feelings most declared by professionals in the studies Humerez et al. (2020) were also anxiety due to the lack of personal protective equipment (PPE), stress, the high level of patients and deaths, fear of becoming infected or infecting a family member or friend, depression and exhaustion.

CONCLUSION

The world for centuries has not experienced a pandemic as devastating as the one that occurred with the Covid-19 pandemic, all professionals had to deal with an unknown, unpredictable disease, with different and unexpected physiological consequences, which also evolved in a surprising way; in some cases the treatment was effective and the patient recovered well and in other cases they did not have a good recovery and as a consequence the evolution to the sad death.

The loss of patients, friends and family

(often taking care of them), work stress due to lack of knowledge of the form of contamination, lack of PPE's, exhausting working hours, demands, many moved away from their families for fear that they could contaminate some loved one caused many to go into depression, mental and physical exhaustion or even the emergence of Burnout syndrome.

It is important to emphasize the importance of institutions that train health professionals, in all parties involved, to include subjects that address the subject in the curriculum and that are worked on in the classroom so that the future professional can be prepared for pandemic situations. Hospitals must offer support services to professionals who worked on the front line, psychological monitoring will be essential, especially at this time when nursing is being "devalued" either by the Senate or by institutions that are dismissing them, justifying unnecessary expenses; therefore, this article aims to show the importance of promoting improvement in the quality of life of these professionals who worked on the front line of the Covid-19 pandemic.

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