Impact of a pandemic on community Mental Health services in India

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COVID 19 in India

• India – 2\textsuperscript{nd} most populous
  • 1.38 billion
  • 7\textsuperscript{th} largest Country

• Kerala – 13\textsuperscript{th} most populous
  • 36 million
  • 23\textsuperscript{rd} largest (of 29) State

• COVID Impact (India)
  • 80000 Covid 19 Positive
  • 2500 deaths

• COVID Impact (Kerala)
  • 535 Covid 19 Positive
  • 4 deaths

• 7 weeks of lockdown
Leverage existing health care infrastructure

Small team of professionals & lay workers

Bigger team of volunteers

Large number of patients
How MHAT works

- >> 11 years
- 50 centres 8 districts
- Weekly Clinics > 4500 clients
- Local Partners
- Cost? Quality Comprehensive Community based
4 key elements

Decentralization  Volunteering  Task sharing  Technology
Lessons

In-person contact may not be crucial, especially when it is already proving difficult.

Strengthen local resources, decrease the distance from service provider.

Existing clients - some subgroups may suffer.

But most remain stable. Some outcomes may even be better.

Less relapses
Smoking & alcohol cessation
Anxiety not about COVID
Conclusions

Unusual times, unusual solutions..

An opportunity to change

Increase in technology does not necessarily mean less human contact..
Thank you

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