

LETTER TO THE EDITOR**ROLE OF REHAB PROFESSIONALS IN COVID-19 CRISES**

The covid-19 pandemic has put healthcare professionals worldwide in an unprecedented situation, with difficult decision options and intense pressure for maneuvers. The World Health Organization (WHO) has classified the coronavirus epidemic as a global public health emergency of international concern and with the number of cases increasing by 13 times in 2 weeks¹.

Pakistan has also been severely affected by this pandemic. Federal Health Minister of Pakistan confirmed two cases on 26 February 2020, and within 15 days, the total number of COVID 19 positive test reached 20². WHO has expressed its concern that Pakistan is facing a major challenge of COVID-19. Physical and social activities of people has prominently affected due to restrictions imposed by government on social gathering. Financial instability, loss of loved ones and social disruption presents great challenge to public health. Marked increase in psychological and emotional distress is observed owing to restricted activities at home and high exposure to stressful media news; this has amplified interpersonal violence such as verbal and physical expression of abuse, rage, hostility and resentment³.

WHO has provided the clear guidelines regarding the physical activity which is necessary to maintain for adequate health and fitness. For instance, it is recommended that the people aged between 16 and 60 years affected by Coronavirus has to engage themselves on weekly training program of moderate intensity for at least 150 minute or 75 minute of vigorous activity⁴.

In the present COVID-19 crises, the rehabilitation professional can play their crucial role in restructuring the community. With holistic approach, vulnerable communities can be protected. The health, social, emotional and economic impact of COVID-19 pandemic can be reduced and optimizing health outcomes. As a member of healthcare community, physical therapist, occupational therapist, respiratory therapist and psychologist, has to identify this opportunity to help vulnerable communities in reimagining and restructuring the future, also more academic work and careful studies is needed to identify culturally relevant strategies of reshaping communities and supporting individuals.

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