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The Centre for Migrant and Refugee Health

The Impact of COVID-19 on Mental Health of Migrant and Refugee: Examining the trends of risk factors prior, during and post COVID-19, and strategies for the recovery process

Abstract

The potential impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the population mental health is immensely increasing and posing significant challenges for future health policies and interventions. Examining changes in population mental health pre, during and post lockdown is crucial and imperative to determine the variation of risk factors and significant predictors during the spread of COVID-19 in 2019-2020 among multicultural communities and other minorities socially isolated, vulnerable and disadvantage communities.

Today, as the global pharmaceutical industries quest for new vaccine stretch out, further questions and challenges around the cultural and religious perspectives of many multicultural communities in Australia and COVID-19 objections need to be examined, discussed, and consider their standpoints toward COVID-19 vaccine. Current religious objections to vaccines, especially ethical dilemmas and issues associated with human tissue cells utilised to create vaccines, and fear on the derivative of vaccine from chemical of unknown compositions. For example, other religions such as Catholic recognises vaccine value and importance in protecting individual and population health. Besides, Christians Scientists lack a formal policy against vaccines but rely on prayers for healing and medical interventions that involve vaccine serve contrary and unnecessary.

This forum aims to discuss pre-existing social determinants of health or current risk factors and how they aggravate and increase mental health prevalence during and post COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, the panel will elucidate and shed lights on the COVID-19 vaccine's cultural perspectives stem from religious standpoints, objections, suspicions, and mistrust of vaccine among Australian Multicultural Communities. Also, examine strategies to the recovery process in COVID-19 post-pandemic crisis for the multicultural communities (in specific migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers).

The panel comprised of Dr. Charles, Dr. Richard, and Dr. Williams.

Questions (65minutes):

- 1.** What were the pre-existing risk factors or social determinants of health affecting multicultural communities before COVID-19? How do they affect the prevalence of mental health during and post COVID-19 pandemics? What do we do to close the gaps during COVID-19? **(Dr. Charles) -20 minutes**
- 2.** What are cultural and religious perspectives on COVID-19 vaccine? Do you think the Australian Multicultural Communities have negative views about COVID-19 vaccine? What would be clergy roles in encouraging the population to take up COVID-19 vaccine? **(Dr. Richard)- 20 minutes**
- 3.** What are the current lessons learnt during COVID-19? How do these lessons inform strategies to COVID-19 crisis recovery process? How would advocate for the Victorian Government to



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- facilitate COVID-19 crisis recovery process for multicultural communities? **(Dr. Williams)-20 minutes**
- 4.** What are examples of clergy interventions suitable during and post COVID-19? **(Dr. Richard) - 5 minutes**