



Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Guest Editors:

Dr. Cristina Crocamo

Department of Medicine and
Surgery, University of Milano
Bicocca, via Cadore 48, 20900
Monza, Italy

Dr. Ashley Elizabeth Muller

Norwegian Institute of Public
Health, PO Box 222 Skøyen, 0213
Oslo, Norway

Dr. Ilaria Riboldi

Department of Medicine and
Surgery, University of Milano-
Bicocca, via Cadore 48, 20900
Monza, Italy

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Message from the Guest Editors

The COVID-19 pandemic and the measures adopted to tackle it may be risk factors for the development, exacerbation, and relapse of a range of mental disorders, especially among the most vulnerable groups. Worldwide, healthcare systems and public health policies have been challenged to develop and scale up novel treatment and prevention strategies. Numerous cross-sectional studies have pointed to healthcare professionals, who have been committed to treating COVID-19 patients during the different stages of the pandemic, as likely at risk of developing psychological distress and mental health problems, including acute traumatic stress, depression, anxiety, problematic alcohol use, and insomnia. Concurrently, a significant detrimental impact to those suffering from ongoing mental health conditions is likely due to decreased access to support and resources. Furthermore, this public health emergency had a key role also considering unhealthy behaviors such as alcohol and substance misuse. Those with substance use disorders are more likely to report COVID-19 and experience worse COVID-19-related outcomes, including higher risk of hospitalization and mortality.





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Editor-in-Chief

Prof. Dr. Paul B. Tchounwou

RCMI Center for Urban Health
Disparities Research and
Innovation, Richard N. Dixon
Research Center, Morgan State
University, Baltimore, MD 21251,
USA

Message from the Editor-in-Chief

Addressing the environmental and public health challenges requires engagement and collaboration among clinicians and public health researchers. Scientific discoveries and advances in this research field play a critical role in providing a rational basis for informed decision-making toward control and prevention of human diseases, especially the illnesses that are induced from environmental exposure to health hazards.

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MDPI, Grosspeteranlage 5
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