



SPANS

Society for Pre and Post Natal services
PVO 12/15

COVID-19 AND COMMUNITY FAMILY MENTAL HEALTH

OCTOBER 2021 REPORT



Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all of the 131 individual generous donors who are giving their precious financial resources to our Global Giving fundraising page, with special thanks to the Global Giving team who are contributing immensely to make sure that we received all the funds donated. Finally, our greatest thanks go to all the SPANS team who participated in the covid-19 community family mental health activities and the general public for sharing their insight and deeply personal experiences and expressions of living with mental distress, mental health problems so that together we can better tackle the unmet mental health care needs of the wider community. The need for mental health services has increased globally during the COVID19 pandemic. SPANS, took this opportunity to intensify community awareness, mental health literacy, training of family mental health therapists and family based intervention, because there is no health without mental health.

One last thing we are currently appealing whoever is going to read this report to share our project with your friends and family helps us spread the word about our work and continue to grow our community of supporters like you. If you're willing to share the story of our work with your network, we would be incredibly grateful.

Recommendations

Did you know that?

- 1) SPANS team is currently relying on public funds to run this covid-19 community family mental health. To continue doing its amazing work we are appealing for more generous donors to give our projects. There is still need for more funding to make sure that we reach many communities in Zimbabwe which are in great need of our mental health care services.

- 2) Despite often high levels of mental health care need, people with mental distress, mental health problems and their families are too often inadequately supported and little attention has been given to many people who are suffering in silence. More education and awareness campaigns are required to make sure that people are aware of the need to promote sound mental health. We realised that in most communities they still define mental health as mental illness, depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress, self-harm.
- 3) We understand far too little about common mental health problems and the expressions and language many people with mental distress, mental health problems are using. Greater investment is urgently needed in research into these expressions of these mental health problems.

This report aims to encourage more investment in mental health, debate and discussion around the needs, desires and hopes of people with mental distress, mental health problems and mental health disorders. Observations and findings, both quantitative and qualitative, from the 30 COVID-19 community family mental health education and awareness campaigns shows the great need for massive re-education of the public to understand mental health as being defined by the World Health Organisation and that can improve mental health care seeking behavior and reduce stigma and discrimination associated with lack of information.

We are not claiming that we do have the answers and it's clear that far more clear that working collaboratively with the community and families has widespread benefits in addressing mental health problems. Massive education and awareness campaigns are needed but this report is the beginning of a much-needed conversation and increased funding. Above are some preliminary recommendations where we believe action could accelerate more joined-up approaches and hence better outcomes for the people we serve.

Call to Action

Covid-19 pandemic was a wakeup call to help people with mental distress, mental health problems, mental health disorders and families to achieve the best outcomes, it is very important that generous individuals, charities, funders and the community at large we start to work together more effectively and seek opportunities to accelerate our impact.

Greater investment, integration and involvement of people with mental distress, mental health problems and mental disorders or illness is needed to provide the right supports across the lifespan.

Together, we can promote sound mental health, tackle stigma and discrimination, grief, suicidal, bereavement issues, improve outcomes, boost awareness. The limited funds that we are currently getting help us as SPANS team to go further and ultimately create a future where people with mental distress, mental health problems and their families enjoy the same opportunities and experiences as the rest of society.

Action Now we are calling generous individuals who think and see the world differently who have the potential to bring huge financial value through giving their precious resources to our projects. We really appreciate such huge commitment. We thank you all in advance.

This is how all the monies received by SPANS is being spent working directly and collaboratively with the communities or people who are affected by mental distress and mental health problems brought in by the Covid-19 pandemic.



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