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## Special article

# Mental health and the COVID-19 crisis in Thailand

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## Abstract

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has produced a wide-ranging effect on mental health for people at all levels, from the general public to at-risk groups, people-under-investigations (PUI) to COVID patients, their relatives and also the health personnel both in the critical and later stages. Hence, this is a challenge for mental health in being an essential part of managing the crisis.

This presentation emphasizes on the role of the Department of Mental Health (DMH) in planning and driving the mental health care system in this crisis. This role includes strengthening the resilience of the public in community/organizations, family and individual level, caring and monitoring for the mental health problems of the PUIs and the patients, especially at the state and local quarantine facilities. The role of community health volunteers are shown. Moreover, it also looked at the mental health care of health professionals working during the crisis and finally, the preparation for the transition to the new normalcy.

All of this will enable the systematic implementation of mental health management during the crisis with the participation of various sectors that are integral in the successful outbreak control and mental health crisis response in Thai context.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, mental health, Thailand

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