



## **Psyc.E.In. MOOC 2**

### **Unit 6**

#### **Chapter 3**

##### **Case study/Good practice**

##### **3.1 b Coordination**

#### **Establishment of a Crisis Unit for Psychological Interventions in Maxi-Health Emergencies within the National Health Service**

##### **Instructions for the learners**

Working in groups, review the case study and answer the questions to complete the activity. It is not necessary to describe the whole process in detail.

In the following case study, you will be provided with a scenario to use in your classroom for an exercise that will last 30-40 minutes:

- 5 minutes to read the instructions and the information about the scenario individually.
- 10 minutes for subgroup discussion.
- 20 minutes to answer the questions.

### **Background Scenario Description**

The Emergency Psychology Team of the National Health System of Central Italy has a 15-year experience in offering qualified psychological support to people who suffered a traumatic event. There are more than 500.000 residents in the area, in more than 100 municipalities. The Team is made up of a group of psychotherapists that work according to guidelines of intervention defined by an Early Psychological Intervention Care Process. Usually, the Team is activated when exceptional situations (situations with a strong emotional impact) occur.

The Covid-19 pandemic can be considered a "collective disaster" that has forced the population to deal with significantly undermining conditions (isolation, quarantine, different lifestyle) and traumatic events (severe impact of the disease, loss of work, premature death). In the period between February 2020 and August 2021, more than 500 people have been assisted by the Emergency Psychology Team. They are orphans, parents with young children, widows and widowers, adults with health or economic problems caused by the pandemic, senior and fragile population. People could access the service directly or be referred by other institutions and organizations.

Collaboration agreements have been made by the Team with both hospital and local authorities, as a protocol that defines the procedures for a rapid referral to psychiatric counseling of patients who need it. There have also been numerous collaborations with associations of the area, which made it possible to better understand the emerging needs and the characteristics of the demand. The collaboration agreements with the hospital and the mayors of the local municipalities have also been significant: they made it possible to reach the most vulnerable people, who lost a family member due to Covid-19. These collaborations have allowed the "outreaching" activity, through which psychologists of the Team could get in touch with people in need without waiting for them to explicitly request for a traditional psychological consultation, obviously respecting privacy.

**Methods, resources and obstacles:**

The Emergency Psychology Team is composed by a group of 30 psychologists employed by the National health System, with specific training in trauma treatment. All of them work for the Psychology Department and assist different population groups: children (0-15 years old), adolescent and young adults (16-26 years old), adults (27-65 years old), senior population (over 66) with cognitive impairments, fragile targets (mental health impairment, social impairment). The population can access the service through a toll-free number active 8 hours a day, 5 days a week, managed by the coordinator of the Team. The service is free of charge and is activated within 48 hours after the call. After a previous need assessment made by the coordinator, the person is referred to one of the Team members who will make contact with him/her in the following 24-48 hours.

### **Objective:**

The aim of the Emergency Psychology Team's work is to provide fast and appropriate psychological early intervention to mitigate acute stress, peritraumatic distress and to prevent post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). To do so, the Emergency Psychology Team has to create a multi-jurisdictional coordination, taking into account the networking of all the services and stakeholders involved. Describe a coordination plan that guarantees the most effective collaboration with other services.

**Answer the following questions to assess the Emergency Psychology Team plan during the Coronavirus pandemic period.**

### **Assessment**

1. Who are your targets? How do you assess their needs?

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2. How do you match the Emergency Psychology Team resources (psychologists' specific competences) with the target's needs?

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3. How do you collect and learn about the interventions of the other stakeholders involved?

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## **Intervention**

4. How do you describe your intervention and integrate your intervention with other interventions?

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5. How do you communicate with other jurisdictions?

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6. How do you communicate with the population?

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## **Monitoring results and Recovery**

7. How will you monitor and evaluate the coordination?

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8. How might the situation have changed as a result of the integration of interventions?

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9. How will you communicate the impact of the networking to stakeholders and community?

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