



Psyc.E.In. MOOC 2

Unit 6

Chapter 3

Case study/Good practice

3.7 Team Caring

Establishment of a Crisis Unit for Psychological interventions in Mass Health Emergencies within the National Health Service

Instructions for the students

Working in groups, read 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 40 minutes:

- 10 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

Early Psychological Intervention is a specific sector that deals with clinical and social interventions in situations of calamity, disasters and emergencies like the Covid-19 pandemic

that was declared at the beginning of 2020. Psychologically, mass emergencies produce medium- to long-lasting effects and put a strain on the individual and community's ability to react and adapt: the self-protection resources normally present in individuals are lacking and, therefore, it is necessary to plan psychological interventions that reactivate individual and group resilience skills. For all these reasons, the Direction of the National Health System of a town of almost 50.000 inhabitants in the south of Italy decided to set up a Psychological Crisis Unit formed by the psychologists/psychotherapists of the National Health System with the specific task of addressing occupational stress and vicarious trauma of the health care workers employed in two hospitals and in two community districts.

Methods, resources and obstacles:

The Psychological Crisis Unit is composed of a group of ten psychologists that work for the National Health System, with specific training in trauma treatment. Three psychologists/psychotherapists have previous experiences in team-caring interventions with health care workers. At the very beginning of the intervention, the health care staff presents:

- some prejudices in asking for help
- reluctance to be assisted by psychologists
- hesitancy to stop overworking and let the emotional overwhelming go
- unwillingness to dedicate time to work on psychological issues during shifts or free time.

Objective:

To provide support to health care workers at any level of the National Health System, introducing briefing and debriefing activities and, if requested, psychological first aid, and trauma-focused intervention with the personnel.

Questions:

Assessment

1. What are the main problems of introducing a team caring intervention?

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2. How do you solve the problems?

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3. How do you provide commitment to Psychological Unit Crisis intervention?

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Intervention

4. Does the intervention of the Psychological Unit Crisis take into account organizational issues (rules and work shifts, workload...), teamwork (recognizing team support) and individual sensibilization on mental health (psychoeducational information about lifestyle and stress management)?

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5. How would you implement the intervention? And how will you communicate to the target?

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6. How would you manage the health care workers' resistance?

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Monitoring results and recovery

7. How will you monitor and evaluate the intervention?

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8. How might the situation have changed as a result of your intervention?

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9. How will you communicate the impact of your intervention to the health care workers involved and to the Director?

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