

IAAP E-News (April, 2020)
Division 17
Division of Professional Practice

April, 2020:

THE WORLD HAS CHANGED!!

Since last we wrote (February E-News, written in late January) the world has been transformed! From the small beginnings of several hundred cases in China in early January, the COVID-19 pandemic now registers over half a million infections world-wide, with death rates soaring (now over 23,000) in Italy, Spain, and the USA – now surpassing those in the original “epicentre”.

As more and more countries “shut down” using “social distancing” as the only tool available to slow, if not treat the virus, there are huge implications for us as psychologists, both professionally and personally:

- **The need to be aware that there will be unique problems** resulting from this crisis: e.g. traumatised medical and other health personnel, as they struggle to deal with the enormity of their task, with too little equipment and too few resources.

Here's a powerful, informative and moving interview with a doctor working on the front line in the UK:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tQD4B_hmdvo&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR00bxHHHV_U3zgup3RArQPkMsnJHbmgIQp5IUuc4e8xabYjILFVYCsxR7s

There will also be/ already are huge job losses in the general population, mirroring the tragic dislocation experienced in the 1930's Depression, with ~30% unemployment foreseen in a number of countries. The emotional impacts, as people struggle to deal with loss of job, potential loss of home/a roof over their head, inability to look after their families, etc., are huge. Economists are engaged in and experimenting with “unconventional economics” – a euphemism for testing what has never been tried before – and it remains very unclear whether the massive economic stimulus packages, now being developed in the USA, Britain, Australia and elsewhere will work (i.e. there is, as yet, no evidence surrounding these large-scale ‘rescue packages’). There is mass uncertainty everywhere....

For resources see:

- APA Pandemic webpage: <https://www.apa.org/practice/programs/dmhi/research-information/pandemics>
 - Disaster Mental Health Information: <https://www.apa.org/practice/programs/dmhi/index>
- **The need to adapt professionally** to these changing conditions, where face-to-face contact with our patients may no longer be feasible, as whole communities and nations “shut down”. The need for and use of telehealth, as a mechanism to address population need without putting the client(s) or practitioner(s) at risk, has resulted in a burgeoning provision of new training opportunities: primarily on-line via webinars and other internet resources.

For example:

- “Doing telehealth well: adjusting your practice for COVID-19 Telehealth tips”

- <https://www.psychology.org.au/Event/21449?view=true>
 - “Integrating eMH into COVID-19 Telehealth Consultations”
https://medcast.com.au/courses/320?utm_medium=email&utm_source=pa_rdot&utm_campaign=bdi-webinar-39
 - American Psychological Association Telehealth Resources:
 - <https://apa.content.online/catalog/product.xhtml?eid=15132&eid=1921>
 - <https://www.apa.org/practice/programs/dmhi/research-information/telepsychology-services-checklist.pdf>
 - **Australian Psychological Society Resources:**
 - **MBS guidance for telehealth requirements**
<http://www.mbsonline.gov.au/internet/mbsonline/publishing.nsf/Content/connectinghealthservices-secpriv>
 - **APS Advice on telehealth setup**
<https://www.psychology.org.au/for-the-public/Medicare-rebates-psychological-services/Medicare-FAQs-for-the-public/Telehealth-services-provided-by-psychologists/Principles-choosing-videoconferencing-technology>
 - **Recent InPsych article**
<https://www.psychology.org.au/for-members/publications/inpsych/2018/October-Issue-4/Your-therapist-is-calling>

- **The need for self-care and looking after oneself in the midst of social distancing and isolation:**

For most of us, the current situation is unprecedented. We need therefore to be mindful of behaving in a way that maintains our own health and wellbeing and provides guidelines for others:

- See: “[The psychological impact of quarantine and how to reduce it: rapid review of the evidence](#)”
- Some useful strategies your clients (and you) can use to maintain good mental health during this unprecedented time of social distancing and isolation:
https://www.psychology.org.au/getmedia/d7cb8abd-3192-4b8f-a245-ace9b8ef44d5/20APS-IS-COVID-19-Isolation-Pl.pdf?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=200320_APSUpdate_allmembers&utm_content=200320_APSUpdate_allmembers+CID_3fbd2587a8667e11881c88851294059b&utm_source=Email%20marketing%20software&utm_term=New%20client%20tip%20sheet%20Maintaining%20your%20mental%20health%20during%20social%20isolation
- **The use of humour:**
For many, there is a paradoxical enjoyment of the role of ironic humour in maintaining sanity during stressful times (i.e. in amongst the appropriate and growing angst). Whilst humour is often “culturally specific”, the therapeutic power of a “good laugh” at times of stress, is known.
See: <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/mental-health/laughter-is-the-best-medicine.htm>

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESSES / SYMPOSIA

Division 17: Professional Practice continues to organize symposia for international meetings and congresses to focus on advances in professional practice and especially the role of psychology and the psychologist in integrated primary healthcare. Sadly, the **International Congress of Psychology** in Prague: (July, 2020) **has been postponed** - due to the Corona virus pandemic - **until July, 2021**.

See: <https://www.icp2020.com/>

The Division of Professional Practice team has committed to presenting a double-symposium (already accepted) entitled: *"The role of psychology in integrated mental health care: an international perspective"*.

Brief Description of the Symposium:

The symposium will provide an overview of current progress in integrated psychological service delivery in the primary care setting in a number of western countries: USA, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Norway and the United Kingdom. These integrated services attempt to redress the ongoing "medicalisation of unhappiness" across the western world and the sub-optimal care provided in which medication is still frequently the first (and often only) treatment of choice, leaving the crucial psychosocial dimensions of mental and general health under-treated. Integrated primary mental and general health service delivery has evolved over the past twenty years to include evidence-based psychological interventions in the primary care setting. Symposium participants will canvas progress in a number of different areas in their specific countries and provide an up-date internationally on key issues relevant to this mode of practice.

All welcome all to attend!

- **100th / Centennial Congress of Applied Psychology in Cancun: (December, 2020)**
It still remains unclear whether this is going ahead.

DIVISION 17: PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE NEWSLETTER:

See: <https://iaap.createsend1.com/t/ViewEmail/t/CB562312D9AFD69D2540EF23F30FEDED>

This **end-of-2019 Newsletter** highlights the main themes and objectives in our Division of Professional Practice work over the past two years (detailed in our monthly E-News). These have included:

- Representation at International and National Professional Congresses (as above);
- Formulation of key objectives in Professional Practice in Psychology and Division 17
- The Role of Psychology in Integrated Primary Mental and Care
- Climate Change and Disaster Preparedness: How Should We Respond?
- Items of Interest
- Things to be Cheerful About!

We welcome input into, and feedback about, all of these key areas.

April, 2020

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PREVIOUS LINKS:

- **UNITED NATIONS INTEGRATED CARE INITIATIVE:**
https://iaapsy.org/site/assets/files/1222/undoc_integratinghealthintoprimarycare.pdf
- **Division 17 End of Year NEWSLETTER:**
<https://iaap.createsend1.com/t/ViewEmail/t/CB562312D9AFD69D2540EF23F30FEDED>