IIMHL & IIDL Leadership Briefing XXII

International and National directions post-COVID-19

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"Across most countries, governments weren't set up to respond to the growing mental health crisis before COVID-19 and they certainly aren't now. That's why we are determined to ensure quality mental health support is accessible to everyone, everywhere both now during this pandemic, and in the future".

- Elisha London, Founder and CEO of United for Global Mental Health.

Introduction

This Briefing looks at the international context as recommended by United for Global Mental Health. It also examines issues of national interest of two countries: Australia and the UK.

The international report contains information from many key international agencies. It argues for what the world needs to be doing now for mental health, so the future is better.

With regard to Australia, the report was written pre-the recent surge (June/July 2020) in COVID-19 cases in Victoria.

The UK has information from the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology which undertakes work looking at national issues for COVID-19 in these two areas.

We hope you find them useful.

The Impact of COVID-19 on Global Mental Health: A Briefing

United for Global Mental Health 2020

Globally, mental health is being challenged like never before by COVID-19. Whilst there are many uncertainties about how the pandemic will progress, what is clear is that the impact on the mental health and psychosocial well-being of those most affected will be significant. This is a pivotal moment in the history of mental health. How the world tackles these challenges now will determine the well-being of a generation and impact the drive to successful recovery and building back societies stronger for the future.

This briefing provides an overview of some of the key issues regarding mental health and COVID-19. It is based on the work of the World Health Organisation (WHO) and UN agencies, and the feedback and inputs of partner organisations through the weekly COVID-19 and mental health webinar series run by United for Global Mental Health and partners, and initiatives including the Open Letter from civil society calling for inclusion of mental health in all national government COVID-19 response and recovery plans.

https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5d42dd6674a94c000186bb85/t/5ede6c1ca4e5f568961b45f8/1591634975358/The+Impact+Of+Covid-19+On+Global+Mental+Health+Report.pdf

Australia: Emerging from COVID, securing Australia's future: policy responses to the pandemic

This is an interactive resource by the Lowry Institute, 30 June 2020

The fight against COVID-19 has been the greatest challenge the world has faced since the middle of last century. As countries have fought to control the disease, they have closed borders, quarantined their citizens, and shut down economies almost entirely. The ramifications will reverberate for years, if not decades, to come.

In April 2020, the Lowy Institute published a digital feature in which twelve Institute experts examined the ways in which the COVID crisis would affect Australia, the region and the world. In this digital feature, Lowy Institute experts provide policy recommendations for Australia to address issues that are critical to our nation's — and the world's — successful emergence from the pandemic.

Countries have turned inwards in an attempt to fend off the threat of an infection that is oblivious to borders. Some have seen globalisation as the cause of the crisis and have focused on solving problems without recourse to the international institutions of global security and prosperity, including the United Nations, the World Health Organization, and the G20. Yet global problems require international solutions.

As the world emerges from the crisis, cooperation between nations will be more important than ever. Nation states cannot revive their economies purely through national solutions. They cannot address global threats, including the possibility of further pandemics, alone.

Australia's achievements in managing the COVID crisis have been exemplary. It has handled the health and economic emergency with great competence. But this is just the beginning of our crisis recovery. The challenges in our region, and the global problems that existed before COVID, have only been exacerbated by the pandemic.

Australia has already done much to address the domestic economic and health issues from the COVID crisis. But to shape a prosperous and secure future, it will also need to work in cooperation with other nations, large and small, allies and partners, on a much broader array of international issues ranging from the economic disruption across the region, pressure from China on trade, and development challenges in the Pacific, to increasingly competitive relations between the United

States and China, the weakening of the World Health Organization, and the declining utility of the G20.

https://interactives.lowyinstitute.org/features/covid-recovery/

UK: The Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST): COVID-19 outbreak: What data or information do experts want the UK Government to release?

POST June 3rd, 2020

Over 1,100 experts have shared with us their concerns about COVID-19 and COVID-impacted areas in the immediate and longer-term future.

This report includes data or information experts would like to see the Government release in order to understand the decisions that underpin its approach to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Generally, experts have highlighted five key areas of concern in the way the UK Government has released information. These include:

- Transparency of decision-making mechanisms.
- The quality, quantity and range of types of evidence used.
- The justification of the Government's decisions.
- The need for accessible and understandable information.
- And the need to publish data as soon as its available.

Experts have also called for additional information to be released by the Government including:

- Academic studies, models and Government data sets used to make decisions.
- All data being collected during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Government guidance to departments, public bodies and public services.
- And recovery strategies from the Government and other public bodies.

https://post.parliament.uk/horizon-scanning/covid-19-outbreak-what-data-or-information-do-experts-want-the-uk-government-to-release/