

ASSESSMENT OF DEPRESSION WITH THE PHQ-9 QUESTIONNAIRE AMONG MONGOLIAN ADULTS

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Background: Researchers continue to highlight the negative impact on mental health of the pandemic and its accompanying measures such as changes in people's daily lifestyles, restrictions on social contact, and fear of contracting the disease or worry of spreading the virus. For instance, in 2020, a study recruiting 9,565 people from 78 countries found that symptoms of depression were high during the peak of the curfews, about 50% of participants reported wasting a lot of time, and 33% reported increased levels of boredom. Therefore, the urgent need for intensive focus on mental health issues in countries all over the world is directed us to conduct current study.

Purpose: To detect and compare the depression between adult citizens of Mongolia, and workers and employees who were on duty during the covid-19 outbreak.

Materials and method: The cross-sectional study was conducted for a 5 weeks period between November 15 and December 20, 2022. We recruited a total of 7919 participants, including randomly sampled 5749 citizens from the total population of 330 soums of 21 provinces, and 163 communes of 9 districts of Ulaanbaatar city, and 2170 emergency service staff those who were on duty during covid-19 outbreak, including doctors, medical specialists, police, emergency staff and drivers. The depression was assessed using the Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9). The survey was completed using the limesurvey program under the supervision of a psychiatrist and a family physician. Statistical analysis was performed using SPSS 24 software. Ethical approval for the research was obtained at the meeting of the Ethics Control Committee of the Ministry of Health of the Ministry of Health on November 9, 2021 (No. 267)

Results: The study recruited 3118 (39.4%) men and 4801 (60.6%) women aged 18-70 years, and the mean age was 37.61 ± 12.2 years. Of these, 1,602 participants were doctors and medical staff. 66.3% (n=5250) of our respondents were from rural areas and 33.7% (n=2669) were from urban area (Ulaanbaatar city). 60.3% (n=4779) of the total participants had no depression, 31.3% (n=2482) had mild depression, 7.0% (n=552) had moderate depression, and 1.1% (n=85) had moderate severe, 0.3% (n=21) had severe depression. Of the 5749 citizens, 62.3% (n=3582) had no depression, 29.6% (n=1703) had mild depression, 6.5% (n=376) had moderate depression, 1.2% (n=71) had moderate severe depression, and 0.3% had severe depression. (n=17) had major depressive disorder. Whereas, of the 2170 on duty staff, 55.2% (n=1197) had no depression, 35.9% (n=779) had mild depression, and 8.1 % (n=176) had moderate depression, 0.6% (n=14) had moderate severe depression, and 0.2% (n=4) had severe depression. Compared to citizens, a statistically significant ($p < 0.001$) higher percentage of mild and moderate level depression was observed among staff on duty. While citizens had a slightly higher percentage of moderate severe and severe level of depression than the staff on duty during the covid-19 outbreak.

Conclusions: The study result indicates that the need for mental health care for staff on duty during the covid-19 outbreak.

Keywords: doctor, nurse, covid-19, urban, rural