Population Mental Health during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Experiences from a Drive-thru Testing Center

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ABSTRACT

Aim/Background: Public health has a unique opportunity to connect with the psychology of the population. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been an increasing concern with the psychology of the population. Recent reports have highlighted the fragility of psychological resilience among patients and healthcare workers. However, less attention has been directed towards the behavior and psychological status of the general public throughout this pandemic.

Materials and Methods: Beginning May 2020 and ending March 12, 2021, the Skagit County Health Department provided a drive-thru COVID-19 testing center during the weekdays for community members and healthcare workers. Test results were typically returned in 1-3 days.

Results: The drive-thru COVID-19 testing model provided the healthcare worker the opportunity to consult with individuals presenting for COVID-19 testing. Public health listened closely, answered the public’s questions and provided additional healthcare information when needed and requested.

Conclusion: Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, COVID-19 drive-thru testing centers have emerged world-wide. For healthcare and public health workers, these centers have allowed for additional conversation on topics related to community mental health.

Key words: COVID-19, Psychological, Stress, Testing, Drive-thru.
and social isolation that often keep us siloed, and briefly connect with their deeper psychological needs to COVID-19. Population mental health and wellness has become a key focus for many COVID-19 drive-thru sites. A shift in the urgency to acknowledge the mental health needs of our population cannot be understated.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST
The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

REFERENCES