# Being COVID Warriors among COVIGNORANTS in Indonesia: The Importance of Mental Health Endurance

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## Abstract

COVID-19 pandemic outbreak has spread across the globe. COVID-19 cases keep increasing as July 04, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) announce about 11,046,917 confirmed cases of COVID-19 that spread in 216 countries. The WHO has published helpful advice to keep and reduce the chances of being infected or spreading COVID-19 among the public such as cleaning hands regularly, maintaining physical distance, wearing masks properly, and encouraging to be in a ventilated area. An idiom for a person who ignores measures to prevent COVID-19 spread acts as if the world is not in the pandemic condition that is COVIGNORANT. Some of the COVIGNORANTS do not trust healthcare workers and spread a lot of false myths regarding COVID-19. Misperception and lack of knowledge about COVID-19 among COVIGNORANS lead to a sense of fear for healthcare workers. People are being a concern regarding contagion exposure from healthcare workers when they come home. Normalizing mental health discussion among healthcare workers should not be a stigma and must be considered one of the important policies that need to be applied among healthcare workers in Indonesia.

Dear Editor,

COVID-19 pandemic outbreak has spread across the globe. COVID-19 cases keep increasing as July 04, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) announce about 11,046,917 confirmed cases of COVID-19 that spread in 216 countries [1]. The WHO has published helpful advice to keep and reduce the chances of being infected or spreading COVID-19 among the public such as cleaning hands regularly, maintaining physical distance, wearing masks properly, and encouraging to be in a ventilated area [2]. However, these rules are often to be ignored in public eyes. Parents still went out in public with children who do not wear masks even when they develop respiratory symptoms and refuse to get the COVID-19 vaccine because they believe in COVID-19 conspiration, and people gather in crowded places without following proper health protocol and purposely ignored the protocol [3], [4], [5]. An idiom for a person who ignores measures to prevent COVID-19 spread acts as if the world is not in the pandemic condition that is COVIGNORANT [6]. Some of the COVIGNORANTS do not trust healthcare workers and spread a lot of false myths regarding COVID-19.

This may be stressful for healthcare workers. As they work hard to save people in hospitals, many people ignore the rules leading to an increase in COVID-19 cases. As frontliners, healthcare workers are involved directly in handling these patients and they are at greater risk than others. Besides excessive workload and inadequate personal protective equipment, healthcare workers must be dealing with increasing cases of COVID-19 due to the COVIGNORANS act [7]. Not only do, they have to deal with the patient in the hospital, but they also have to isolate themselves from their loved ones to keep working in the hospital. Medical healthcare workers are experiencing unremitting stress that could trigger psychological issues such as anxiety, insomnia, depression, and posttraumatic stress disorder and lead to substance use [8], [9]. As physical or social distancing can help reduce the transmission, this can affect mental health as well [10]. Misperception and lack of knowledge about COVID-19 among COVIGNORANS lead to a sense of fear for healthcare workers. People are being a concern regarding contagion exposure from healthcare workers when they come home. The labeling may cause discrimination, and adding physical isolation to family social support could increase mental health problems in healthcare workers.

To read or not to read, that is the question regarding the news. If you read the news, you will gain knowledge about the situation of COVID-19 inside your city, country, or even the whole world. However, on the other hand, many contradicted opinions in social media lead people to have negative views regarding the disease itself. Even after 3 years of pandemic situation,

people still believe that COVID-19 is fiction and doctors are taking monetary advantage over-diagnosing COVID-19, especially with post-COVID-19 Indonesia economic recovery situation. Some people receive vaccination because of mandatory regulation from the government but still ignore the fact that COVID-19 disease still exists in Indonesia.

COVID-19 pandemic is a challenge that must be overcome with cooperation from healthcare workers, the government, and importantly the citizens themselves. Occupational burnout is a phenomenon that commonly occurs in the health workplace that can cause individuals to become desperate, forcing them to withdraw mentally [11]. However, policy regarding mental health in healthcare workers has not been addressed yet. Some studies found that practicing safe care is proven to be effective among healthcare workers [12], [13]. This practice allows healthcare workers to be aware of their's own emotions and stress level. Enhancing a positive work environment can be supported by government or hospital-affiliated institutions/organizations' policies to protect the mental health of healthcare workers. It is necessary to create adequate working conditions for health workers. This may support medical staff in adapting to the working environment quickly and maintaining a better mental and healthy balance to be able to work. Lowering job demands and workload, while increasing job control and reward might help to protect medical health workers. Story sharing would be important as well as reinforcing the positive assets of persons. Normalizing mental health discussion among healthcare workers should not be a stigma and must be considered one of the important policies that need to be applied among healthcare workers in Indonesia.

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