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Introduction:

The current pandemic of COVID 19 had come as guest this new year and has lingered on like an unwelcome rude guest. The greatest stress during this season is the fear of getting infected. Naturally, the ones facing the most stress are the frontline health care workers. India has been under lockdown since March'2020. Lockdown itself has also taken a toll on the mental health of people owing to inability to socialize and go the work. The main stress among the Hematology health care workers is the fear of infection, passing on the virus to family members and death.

This study aims at assessing the perception and psychological help seeking behaviour among Hematology healthcare workers during the COVID19 pandemic in India. This study was conducted among 177 hematology related healthcare workers in India and it exposes a significant stress these people are undergoing in this pandemic. This area is one of the least talked during this pandemic but the impact it is going to have in future is humongous.

Materials and Methods:

We conducted a survey from the month of April’2020 till July 2020 among some of these hematology services related health care workers from different parts of India via electronic media [Survey Monkey]. A simple questionnaire of total thirteen questions was formulated. Questions were framed in simple english language for easy understanding of all participants. Social media was used for distributing this questionnaire. Our target population was hematology service related health care workers.
**Results and Discussion:** We got a total of 177 responses and all the answers were analysed on per question basis. 60% of those who participated were doctors, followed by nurses (32%) and rest were lab personnel and other health care workers. 66% of participants belonged to the age group 31-45 years, followed by 22% belonging to 20-30 years, 11% belonged to 46-60 years and none were above 60 years of age. 56% were males and rest were females. 73% were married and rest were single.

Among all those who participated in this survey two thirds were not diverted to frontline Covid 19 patient care. Only one third (33.9%) were actually redirected to direct care of Covid 19 patients in their respective set-ups. On a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 being minimal to 10 being extremely high needing help, anxiety was scored. 48% of all scored themselves with an anxiety level of 4-6. 15% each scored for 1-3 and 7-9. 5% faced extreme anxiety needing help. 36% had moderate fear of infecting their family members. 30% and 18% had mild and severe fear, respectively.

When enquired about the type of symptoms experienced by them, the most common reply was that they felt low and were depressed. Many experience sleep disturbances with increase in irritability, restlessness and health anxiety for Covid. Surprisingly, 40% denied any such symptoms at all. Adjustment and adaptability with the changing environment are a deciding factor on the mental well-being of everyone. Most popular method was avoiding frequent news updates (52.5%), followed by learning new skills and connecting with family and friends (47.5%). Least popular modality was resorting to healthy distraction (28%).

17% of all participants felt a need for psychological consultation for themselves, 3.4% wanted consultation for their family members and 3.4% wanted such consultation for both themselves and their family members too. Among those who wanted professional help 58% preferred tele-consultation and rest aspired for personal consultation.

**Conclusion:**

The above responses show that work place stress has increased among hematology health care workers in the current pandemic situation which in broad terms is true for any specialty. A mental burnout and fatigue is setting among healthcare workers in this part of the country as COVID19 seems like a chronic story now. It is advisable to keep psychological help ready for all those involved in frontline Covid 19 health care. Its high time hospital administrators start taking notice this aspect of healthcare workers and start working on creating a positive work environment.
Disclosures
No relevant conflicts of interest to declare.

Author notes
* Asterisk with author names denotes non-ASH members.