

COVID-19 existing resource response #11

(Last updated 2 June 2021)

Question

What is the best-available evidence about mental health and addictions impacts during the second and third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic and strategies to address such impacts for citizens and/or healthcare workers?

What we found

We searched the COVID-END global and domestic inventories of best evidence syntheses to identify evidence documents that focused on mental health and addictions impacts and strategies to address them for citizens and/or healthcare workers. The search terms used were: “mental health” OR “mental health impact” OR (substance use OR addictions OR substance abuse) AND “second wave” AND (public OR general population) OR (healthcare worker OR health worker OR staff). We also contacted 40+ Canadian evidence-synthesis teams by email. The existing evidence we identified is provided in Table 1 for citizens and Table 2 for healthcare workers and service providers.

The documents identified in Table 1, include:

- two living reviews;
- three full systematic reviews (with one review relevant for both citizen and healthcare worker populations);
- one rapid review;
- four protocols for systematic reviews (with one protocol relevant for both citizen and healthcare worker populations); and
- four single studies.

The documents identified in Table 2, include:

- one living review;
- two full systematic reviews (with one review relevant for both citizen and healthcare worker populations);
- one rapid review;
- three protocols for systematic reviews (with one protocol relevant for both citizen and healthcare worker populations); and
- one single study.

Box 1: Our approach

COVID-END in Canada responds to requests for evidence syntheses about topics related to COVID-19 that are likely to be explicitly considered by high-level decision-makers in multiple Canadian jurisdictions. This includes conducting rapid evidence profiles, living evidence profiles, rapid syntheses and living evidence syntheses. Examples of these evidence products can be viewed [here](#).

Sometimes requests are submitted about questions that have already been addressed by one or more recently updated, high-quality evidence syntheses or will be addressed soon by work underway (e.g., through a rapid synthesis underway with or being planned by a Canadian team, registered synthesis protocol or CIHR funding to conduct a synthesis). Other times all the requestor needs is a list of available evidence syntheses undertaken by COVID-END in Canada partners or COVID-END global partners. In these situations, we prepare a response that profiles these existing resources. These responses are typically prepared by a combination of: 1) searching both the COVID-END domestic inventory and the COVID-END global inventory; and 2) contacting 40+ Canada evidence-synthesis teams to identify any additional resources or work underway that is relevant to the question posed in a request. Such an existing resource response is equivalent to a rapid evidence profile prepared with the same turn-around time.

We followed this approach to prepare this existing resource response, which was prepared in half a business day (and hence the equivalent to a half-day rapid evidence profile) to inform next steps in evidence synthesis, guideline development and/or decision-making related to the question that was posed.

Of these documents, we identified three single studies that make specific mention of mental health and addictions impacts in relation to the second wave (but none about the third wave) which are focused on: 1) [prevalence of psychiatric diagnosis and related psychopathological symptoms among patients with COVID-19 during the second wave of the pandemic](#); 2) [Polish studies examining mental health during the second wave](#); and 3) [mental health and wellness of service providers working with people experiencing homelessness in Canada](#).

We included AMSTAR ratings for any systematic reviews or rapid reviews that already have them in the COVID-END inventory of best evidence syntheses. Otherwise, AMSTAR ratings were not conducted given the timeline available to prepare the response.

In addition, a series of [knowledge mobilization products about COVID-19 and mental health](#) has recently been prepared that are based on projects focused on citizens and healthcare workers that were funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and which may be relevant.

Table 1: Hyperlinked titles to evidence documents about mental health and addictions impacts among citizens

| Evidence type | Evidence documents identified |
|-------------------------|---|
| Guidelines | None identified |
| Living reviews | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comparison of mental health symptoms prior to and during COVID-19: Evidence from a living systematic review and meta-analysis (literature last search 22 March 2021) Effects of COVID-19 mental health interventions among community-based children, adolescents, and adults: A living systematic review of randomised controlled trials (literature last searched 22 March 2021) |
| Full systematic reviews | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact of COVID-19 on mental health in adolescents: A systematic review (AMSTAR rating 5/9; literature last searched 27 January 2021) An evaluation of the mental health impact of SARS-CoV-2 on patients, general public and healthcare professionals: A systematic review and meta-analysis (AMSTAR rating 7/11; literature last searched 22 January 2021; also included in Table 2) The prevalence of depressive symptoms, anxiety symptoms and sleep disturbance in higher education students during the COVID-19 pandemic: A systematic review and meta-analysis (AMSTAR rating 8/11; literature last searched 1 January 2021) |
| Rapid reviews | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A rapid review of the impacts of 'Big Events' on risks, harms, and service delivery among people who use drugs: Implications for responding to COVID-19 (AMSTAR rating 4/11; last literature search date not stated) |
| Protocols for reviews | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the mental health and learning of college and university students: A protocol of systematic review and meta-analysis The mental health impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on post-secondary students Living systematic review on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the general populations' mental health, alcohol/substance abuse and violence The impact of COVID-19 on mental health: A rapid umbrella review (also included in Table 2) |
| Single studies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examining the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on family mental health in Canada: Findings from a national cross-sectional study Anxiety, depression and stress during the COVID-19 pandemic: Results from a cross-sectional survey Mental health during the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic – Polish studies Prevalence of psychiatric diagnosis and related psychopathological symptoms among patients with COVID-19 during the second wave of the pandemic |

Table 2: Hyperlinked titles to evidence documents about mental health and addictions impacts among healthcare workers and service providers

| Evidence type | Evidence documents identified |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Guidelines | None identified |
| Living reviews | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health of clinical staff working in high-risk epidemic and pandemic health emergencies a rapid review of the evidence and living meta-analysis (AMSTAR rating 4/11; last literature search date not stated) |
| Full systematic reviews | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health of medical staff during the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic: A systematic review and meta-analysis (literature last searched 19 April 2020) • An evaluation of the mental health impact of SARS-CoV-2 on patients, general public and healthcare professionals: A systematic review and meta-analysis (AMSTAR rating 7/11; literature last searched 22 January 2021; also included in Table 1 under full systematic reviews) |
| Rapid reviews | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mental health impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on healthcare workers, and interventions to help them: A rapid systematic review (AMSTAR rating 7/10; literature last searched 11 May 2020) |
| Protocols for reviews | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examining the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the mental health of healthcare workers: A systematic review • The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the mental health of medical staff considering the interplay of pandemic burden and psychosocial resources – A rapid systematic review • The impact of COVID-19 on mental health: A rapid umbrella review (also included in Table 1 under protocols for reviews) |
| Single studies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health and wellness of service providers working with people experiencing homelessness in Canada: A national survey from the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic |
| Other types of documents | None identified |

Al-Khateeb S, Bhuiya A, Bain T, Mansilla C, Wilson MG, Lavis JN. COVID-END in Canada existing resource response #11: What is the best-available evidence about mental health and addictions impacts during the second and third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic and strategies to address such impacts for citizens and/or healthcare workers? Hamilton: McMaster Health Forum, COVID-END in Canada, 2 June 2021.

To help health- and social-system leaders as they respond to unprecedented challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the McMaster Health Forum is preparing responses like this one. This response is funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada. The opinions, results, and conclusions are those of the McMaster Health Forum and are independent of the funder. No endorsement by the Public Health Agency of Canada is intended or should be inferred.

