



MHPSS EVD MSF experience

Cristina Carreño Glaría
Mental Health Advisor
cristina.carreno@barcelona.msf.org

MHPSS EVD—MAIN OBJECTIVES:

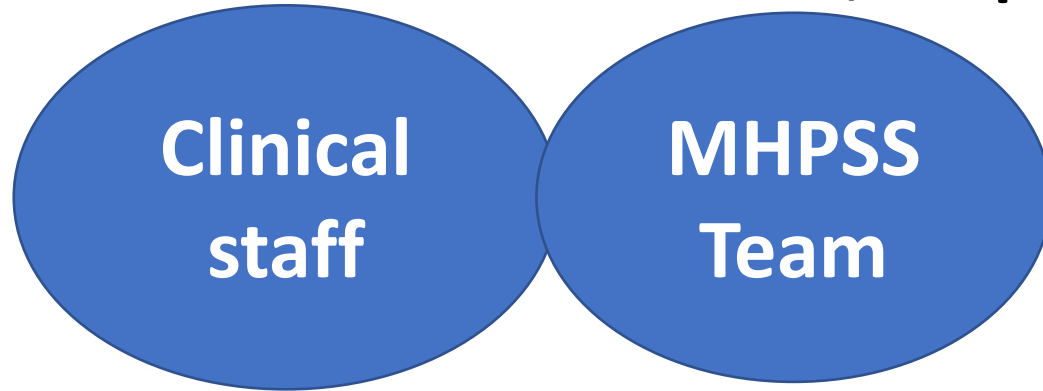
- To alleviate individual, family and community suffering.
- To provide psychological support for patients presenting psychological distress and/or mental disorders;
- To humanize patient care and restore dignity;
- To support patients, relatives and communities encouraging better acceptance of care and practices linked to measures of protection;
- To help staff with self care and support ,when needed.

MHPSS EVD: 3 main axis

- MHPSS patients and relatives
- MHPSS communities
- MHPSS staff

MHPSS patients and relatives in ETC

MHPSS activities in **admission, hospitalisation, discharge**



- *Group , family, individual activities*
- *MHPSS support for all and care of psychiatric emergencies*

Admission

- Information about the ETC , staff , IPC measures
- Listen to their doubts, concerns, fears
- Validate, normalize, contain
- Discuss and establish how the communication with them, between them and their families will be done

Hospitalisation

Help them deal with their fear, loneliness, anxiety, sleeping problems..

Names on the EPI to make the contact with staff more human

Communication between people inside ETC and outside (safe open spaces with secure distance, phone, tablets, letters).

- **Private space** to provide psychological care to patients, communicate with families
- **Radio** within the isolation unit can help the patient feel less “isolated”

DRC Ebola outbreak crisis update | MSF



MSF Covid treatment center, Sanaa (Yemen)



Hospitalisation

Patients:

- Group activities for patients
- Special focus on children
- Individual support

Relatives:

- Reassure family members their loved one is well cared for.
- Facilitate communication between families and patients (visiting hours as flexible as possible , phones, tablets, letters...)
- Give information about ETC, short video of ETC
- Conduct health education sessions;





MH counselors talking to patients and relatives (Sierra Leone)

Discharge

- Counsel recovered patients upon discharge
- Certificate of recovery
- Provide kit: hygiene items
- Discharge celebration (singing...)

[Ebola Survivor in DRC - YouTube](#)

- **Accompany them home.** A patient discharged home reinforces the message of hope and provides proof of the possibility to recover. However, fear of the virus is sometimes transferred to the recovered person who may be stigmatized.

When a patient dies in the ETC

- Help the family to say goodbye , listen to them, validate their emotions
- Provide information about **safe and dignified burial**.
- Ensure the **family is fully involved** in the preparation for the burial.

Support during burials at community level:

- Traditional burial rituals and practices usually need to be modified **.It is essential to understand these rituals and cultural grieving processes.**
- Allow relatives to see the body and give personal belongings to be placed in the coffin or body bag (as appropriate);
- Ensure respect for traditions (songs, dances, timing of ceremony, etc.) and allow any expression of mourning (prayers, dance) that does not compromise safety;

Psychological sequelae among EVD survivors

Liberia MSF: high levels of depression, anxiety, survivors guilt, fears.

Recent meta-analysis:

Estimated prevalence of anxiety 14%, depression 15% and insomnia 22%

Acharibasam JW, Chireh B, Menegesha HG (2021) Assessing anxiety, depression and insomnia symptoms among Ebola survivors in Africa: A meta-analysis. PLoS ONE 16(2):e0246515.
<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0246515>





Thank you

[The Boy Who Tricked Ebola - YouTube](#)

cristina.carreno@barcelona.msf.org