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The Ukraine Crisis: Mental Health Resources for Clinicians and Researchers

The world has watched in horror as the recent events in Ukraine have unfolded. After a long period of experiencing anticipatory threat with Russian troops amassing on their border, the Ukrainian population is now subjected to a full military invasion with death, destruction and displacement being a daily reality. It almost goes without saying that the mental health consequences for the Ukrainian people will be enormous. Already in 2016 there were 1.8 million internally displaced Ukrainians (UNHCR, 2016), and the “Internally Displaced Person’s Mental Health Survey in Ukraine” (Roberts et al., 2017), carried out from March to May 2016, demonstrated that mental health problems were common among IDPs in Ukraine. 22% of IDPs had symptoms of depression, 18% of anxiety (Roberts et al., 2019), and 55% reported significant levels of somatization (Cheung et al., 2019). For current drinkers, potentially hazardous drinking was reported by 14.3% of men and 1.7% of women (Ramachandran et al., 2019). The prevalence of ICD-11 PTSD was 21% and 57.6% of those experiencing clinically significant levels of impairment (Shevlin et al., 2018). To place all this in a global context, a recent study estimated the cross-national lifetime prevalence of PTSD at 3.9% (Koenen et al., 2017). These mental health needs among IDPs in Ukraine occurred in a context of very limited availability of mental health services, with 74% of participants who likely required mental health and psychosocial support care not receiving it (Roberts et al., 2019).

At present, the Ukrainian community of mental health professionals are providing help and support in unimaginably difficult conditions; several hotlines operate, volunteers are mobilized and trained in psychological first aid provision, and mobile crisis intervention stations are in operation. However, in chaotic situations there is a risk of offering non-evidence-based interventions and the collection of evidence is crucially important and needs to be considered as inevitable part of ongoing and future interventions. Resources are required for this.

The International Trauma Consortium (ITC) is a collaboration of researchers and clinicians working in the field of traumatic stress studies. In order to assist mental health clinicians and researchers we have collated and hosted a range of established and validated mental health measures that have been translated into Ukrainian and Russian and these are now freely available to download at <https://www.traumameasuresglobal.com/>

The measures are

1. The International Trauma Questionnaire (Cloitre et al., 2018); a measure of ICD-11 Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Complex PTSD.
2. The PHQ-9 (Kroenke, Spitzer & Williams, 2001); a brief self-report measures of depression
3. The GAD-7 (Spitzer et al., 2006); a brief self-report measure of generalized anxiety.

4. The Life Events Checklist for DSM-5 (Gray et al., 2004); a measure of trauma exposure.
5. The Patient Health Questionnaire-15 (Kroenke et al., 2002); a measure of the severity of somatic symptoms
6. The WHODAS-12 (World Health Organization, 2001); a brief measure of functional impairment.

We hope that these measures are helpful to clinicians and researchers who will be dealing with the psychological aftermath of the conflict in Ukraine. We intend to continue to and extend this repository, for example child and adolescent measures will soon be added, and we'd welcome any other resources (email MS or PH).

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