



# Psychosocial support:

## Guidance for health facilities

Health workers are likely to experience a lot of pressure and stress as they handle COVID-19 patients or those who are believed to be infected. This may negatively affect their mental health. The following are some actions that can be taken to ensure the wellbeing of frontline workers.

- Remember that feeling under pressure or stressed is not a reflection on your capacity to do your job.
- Try and use helpful coping strategies such as ensuring sufficient rest and respite during work or between shifts, eat sufficient and healthy food, engage in physical activity, and stay in contact with family and friends.
- You may experience avoidance by family as they try to avoid infection. Again, remember that this is not a reflection on you. So keep in touch with them through digital means and seek the company of fellow health workers.
- For health leaders or managers:
  - Find ways to provide mental health support for workers.
  - Plan the facility's response for the long-term.
  - Ensure good communication with staff.
  - Rotate workers from higher-stress to lower-stress functions.
  - Partner inexperienced workers with their more experienced colleagues.
  - Orient all staff on how to provide basic mental health support.
- Alcohol-based hand rub products should contain at least 60% alcohol and should be certified. Alcohol-based rub should be conducted for 20-30 seconds. If alcohol-based hand sanitizer is not available, it can be made by carefully following WHO guidance.
- Plain soap and water can be used to wash hands for 40 to 60 seconds.
- COVID-19 virus primarily spreads through droplet and contact transmission. Contact transmission means by touching infected people and/or contaminated objects or surfaces. Thus, your hands can spread the virus to other surfaces and/or to your mouth, nose or eyes if you touch them.
- Hand Hygiene is one of the most effective actions you can take to reduce the spread of pathogens and prevent infections, including the COVID-19 virus.