

**GOVERNMENT OF NAGALAND
DIRECTORATE OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
NAGALAND : KOHIMA**

NO. DHFW/COVID-19/2019-20/ 185

Dated Kohima, the 14th April, 2020

To

The Editor
Nagaland Post / Morung Express / Eastern Mirror / Nagaland Page / Nagaland Today /
Capi / Tir Yimyim

Subject: **Press release on counselling services during COVID-19 pandemic**

Sir/Madam,

Please find enclosed a press release on counselling service during COVID-19 pandemic which is prepared for public interest by Department of Health and Family Welfare, in collaboration with All Nagaland Counsellors Association (ANCA).

For any queries, contact:

- HFW COVID-19 Control Room, Nagaland:- 9099607609/ 7085444710

Yours faithfully



(DR. KEVICHUSA MEDIKHRU)
Mission Director (NHM)
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GOVERNMENT OF NAGALAND
DIRECTORATE OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
&
ALL NAGALAND COUNSELLORS ASSOCIATION

PRESS RELEASE

Why counselling is needed during COVID-19

Are you anxious, stressed, not understood, uncertain, and helpless or have a myriad of concerned mixed feelings and thoughts as you continue to see the world battling covid-19? Are you feeling isolated and separated due to the lockdown? Yes, regular exposure about corona virus via newspapers, television, WhatsApp and other forms of social media may result in a range of responses which can have a huge negative impact on our well-being both mentally and physically. It can create a feeling of helplessness and be trapped in a cage without much safety or connection.

Numerous questions creep into mind due to the unpredictability of the future. These are some of the challenges a person may go through and which need to be duly addressed.

As the world experiences the global pandemic, our contemporary generation too has been undergoing a major state-wide lockdown for the first time along with the rest of the country. This has changed almost every aspect of life we know. All the pre-scheduled programmes and day-to-day external activities have come to a halt and it has brought an abrupt change within the family's environment paving the way for a new form of lifestyle.

Who needs help the most? One of the most vulnerable categories that have been affected by this lockdown is the young children in the families. All of a sudden, they are asked to be inside the house and given unlimited access to the internet and television. Without much exception, most of the parents would warn their children of "something dangerous" would they happen to step outside. The social isolation, 24x7 lockdown, and constant anxious news watched by the older members of the family can cause an unprecedented amount of fear and anxiety in the little ones. Epidemiologists say that young people reeling under different types of stresses in the present situation due to confinement within their homes can give rise to mental issues in the families such as leading to mood swings and tiffs with the family members.

A plethora of entertainment opportunities in the internet, overuse of social media, and binge-watching are openly accessible for everyone. Such platforms pose a high-risk factor if left unregulated.

Using such platforms can become an escape means for feelings of helplessness, guilt, and anxiety along with unruly behaviours such as complete isolation from the family dynamics and addiction to computer and mobile that calls for attention. But not everyone can communicate their internal turmoil with family and friends or deal with such things by themselves. Fortunately, one of the safest and healthy ways to cope with such turmoil is to seek professional help through telephonic counseling.

The security personnel need special attention. Police on duty could be the primary or secondary victims of trauma owing to the nature and the demand of their long working hours, pressure and exposure. While they may show more resilience compared to the general population, prolonged working hours and exposure to extreme stressors may trigger negative actions such as high handedness towards the public and misuse of power as an indirect expression of their pent-up stresses and frustrations.

Health workers who risk themselves in the frontline to face such situation and whose contributions cannot be comprehended in a few words are another special group of people. It is because they are exposed to direct contact with the person infected by the deadly virus which is worrisome not only for them but their family. Health workers and their families need support.

Another group of people who can benefit from counselling are those put in quarantine. Counselling can be a big source of reassurance to know that "you're not alone" in the battle.

Free Counselling Service Available

Counselling services have been freely extended and available for the general public knowing that various groups of people mentioned need counselling at this crucial time. Such facilities are made available in order to monitor the psychological, behavioural and interpersonal responses during this COVID-19 emergency by a group of professionally trained counsellors.

These counsellors are trained to help people work through their problems and various situations with a focus on healing. It can help the individual to pursue growth and development in a holistic way. The overall aim is to provide a chance to work towards living more satisfyingly and resourcefully.


Recognize our near and dear ones who may need to get help. It is necessary to be conscious of our reactions to the news and know strategies to cope with distress. Social Stigma should not stop a person from seeking professional help. Remember, good mental status in the tough times may help win you the battle more easily!

Issued in public interest by:

Department of Health & Family Welfare, Nagaland:Kohima In collaboration with
All Nagaland Counsellors Association

For counselling services required, send message through WhatsApp to this number 7005251298 with the following details: Name, age/Gender, Address and Reason in brief.

Strict Confidentiality will be maintained.



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