



PSYCHOLOGY ASSOCIATION OF ZAMBIA (PAZ)-MESSAGE TO THE PUBLIC ON COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The COVID-19 pandemic is real, it has adversely impacted our normal lives; travels restricted, learning institutions closed, social gatherings in large numbers discouraged, restrictions on religious activities and so on. It is therefore not surprising that all of us are panicking as a result of various uncertainties. Fear and anxiety are normal reactions under such situations. The Psychology Association of Zambia (PAZ) urges members of the public not to panic but adhere to preventative measures as stipulated by Ministry of Health (MoH) and other stakeholders.

Psychological stress resulting from fear and uncertainties about COVID-19 can manifest itself through physical symptoms. People may experience headaches and flus not necessarily caused by the virus but stress, because stress hormones can compromise immune functioning making us vulnerable to illness. For instance, people may develop flu like symptoms due to stress and also due to weather changes, especially around this time in Zambia when we are moving from the rainy season to winter.

As PAZ, we urge people adhere to the guidelines of MoH and to seek medical attention when presented with flu like symptoms and to stay at home when experiencing these symptoms. While we practice social distancing, let us also avoid stereotypical statements towards people who may present symptoms associated with COVID-19.

Those being placed in isolation or under quarantine at home may be prone to depression, generalized anxiety disorders and stress. To deal with being on your own, it is important to seek social support from family and friends through telephone and social media. It is also pertinent for all of us to stay healthy through eating nutritious food, maintaining good self- hygiene, getting at least 30 minutes of exercise every day, and getting sufficient sleep.

PAZ wishes all members of the public and various stakeholders a successful fight against this pandemic, and urges everyone not to panic, instead to safeguard mental health as subsequent fight for physical health.

For further information on psychological well-being and COVID-19, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us on +260762024357 or email secretarygeneral@paz.co.zm and publicity@paz.co.zm.

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