



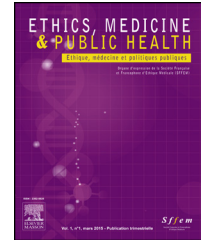
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## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### Suicide prevention in the COVID-19 pandemic: Specific characteristics of each stage



**Keywords** Efficiency; Pandemic; Suicide

*Dear Editor,*

In a crucial discussion of suicide's frequency in Asia during the pandemic, Charlier [1] highlights some domains that interfere in this complex phenomenon. The author questions the role of political leaders and international authorities that influence public health policy [1]. However, Charlier [1] did not mention a vital aspect involving suicide and public health policy: considering specific characteristics of each stage.

Indeed, among the profound consequences around societies worldwide provoked by the COVID-19 pandemic, the mental health and well-being impacts are one of the main. According to Alonzo et al. [2], the psychological distress resulting from the pandemic increased in countries with poor socioeconomic conditions. Regardless of the cause associated with the deterioration of each individual's health conditions, the aggravation of psychic suffering presents its last stage in the unfortunate attitude of suicide. Thus, it is urgent developing discussions and measures to avoid this act.

Moutier [3] warned of the importance of political measures and medical strategies to prevent suicide. In addition, Moutier [3] mentioned the suicide contagion and the media's role in avoiding this phenomenon. Unfortunately, many media channels have denied their commitment to presenting qualified content to the public audience. Information that only fosters fear and does not offer technical perspectives on some subjects is directly associated with increased suffering. From a psychoanalysis perspective [4], some social phenomena acquire a potential unconscious level of influence in individuals, fostering specific feelings and attitudes: suicide is one of them.

One point to complement Moutier's [3] and Charlier's [1] valuable contributions refers to considering specific characteristics of stage post-pandemic in the development of public health policy. In historical tragedies that impacted societies on a large scale (e.g., World Wars), the meaning of survival was associated with ambiguous feelings [5]: happiness in being alive coupled with deep anguish of questioning the reasons for not having died. Another characteristic of stage post-event is the suffering to deal with many answers

that were unclear or not possible to access before. That is, the suffering to deal with the truth.

After the publication of pieces of the dr. Anthony Fauci's emails [6], the axis of interpretation of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the feelings linked with this interpretation changed. Part of the content highlights a serious hypothesis that the laboratory of Wuhan created the virus. Thus, how much knowledge about the virus's origin and other past uncertainties could impact the level of suffering and suicide rates?

In conclusion, the strategies to prevent suicides need to consider each context's specifics and stage. The post-pandemic stage has crucial elements that align with mental health disorders and must be considered both in clinical care and in strategies of public health policies.

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#### Disclosure of interests

The author declares that he has no competing interests.

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