

# Nurse Strategies to Improve the Quality of Psychosocial Care During the COVID-19 Pandemic

## Abstract

**Background:** Nurses play a critical role in combating the COVID-19 pandemic, facing numerous challenges in providing care to COVID-19 patients, particularly addressing their psychological issues. This study aims to explore nurses' experiences in overcoming care challenges and enhancing nursing strategies. The study was held in Indonesia. **Materials and Methods:** Primary nurses and nurse managers responsible for COVID-19 patient care were interviewed extensively for data collection. The Colaizzi method was used for data processing. **Results:** The study identified three key themes: psychosocial nursing interventions, addressing obstacles in psychosocial care, and enhancing the quality of psychosocial nursing care. **Conclusions:** Comprehensive nursing care proves effective in addressing the psychosocial challenges faced by COVID-19 patients.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, nursing administrators, pandemics, psychiatric nursing

## Introduction

Nurses are at the forefront of the healthcare system's response during a pandemic. As the pandemic escalates, nurses face the brunt of the epidemic, dealing with heightened physical burdens due to exposure to highly transmissible diseases, extended work hours, and discomfort from personal protective equipment (PPE). The exhaustion of PPE exacerbates their mental health difficulties, encompassing stigmatization, apprehensions of mortality, susceptibility to infection, psychological anguish, and deficiencies in understanding. Nurses endure stress due to lengthy exposure to demanding hospitalizations, intricate medical assessment procedures, and anxieties about resuming their regular routines.<sup>[1]</sup> Notwithstanding these difficulties, nurses should aid patients in addressing both physiological and psychological concerns. The objective of this study is to investigate the experiences of nurses in improving nursing care practices to effectively handle psychological issues.

## Materials and Methods

This phenomenological research explores nurses' strategies to improve nursing

care for COVID-19 patients. The study included primary nurses providing care to COVID-19 patients in Bogor, Indonesia. Focused group discussions (FGD) in January 2022 served as the platform for direct interviews, lasting approximately sixty minutes and involving 25 participants. The qualitative analysis utilized the Colaizzi method for data processing.

## Ethical considerations

Before commencing the interview, the researcher elucidated the objective and immediacy of the study to the participants. The study received approval from the research ethics committee of the Faculty of Nursing at Universitas Indonesia, as indicated by letter number Ket-241/UN2.F12.D1.2.1/PPM.00.02/2021.

## Results

This study identified three major themes and 13 categories [Table 1].

## Discussion

Nurses are capable of implementing non-pharmacological nursing interventions to address psychological issues. There is a strong positive correlation between engaging in high levels of religious coping and experiencing fewer psychological

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**Table 1: Themes and categories**

Theme	Categories
Psychosocial nursing interventions	Health education Spiritual approach Relaxation technique Strengthening family support Teamwork collaboration Environment modification
Overcoming obstacles to psychosocial care	Optimizing the use of PPE Time management Nurse staffing arrangements Facility upgrade
Improving the quality of psychosocial nursing care	Maintain a caring attitude Improve therapeutic communication Increased knowledge of psychosocial nursing care

disorders.<sup>[2]</sup> Relaxation, music, meditation, and exercise help lower anxiety.<sup>[3]</sup> The family also assists patients in overcoming psychosocial difficulties.<sup>[4]</sup> Enhanced communication tactics and tools, such as the telephone or social media, have the potential to significantly reduce psychological issues.<sup>[5]</sup> In the following intervention, nurses might deliver health education to address psychosocial issues.<sup>[6]</sup> Educating patients and their families about COVID-19 and family involvement in the healing process is possible.

Along with improvements in the treatment of COVID-19, disease management often evolves, including alterations to information, procedures, and protocols.<sup>[7]</sup> An expedited training program could serve as the subsequent measure to address the nurses' poor understanding of COVID-19 and psychosocial care. During a pandemic, disaster rescue training can improve nurses' proficiency, understanding of assistance, effectiveness of response, and ability to address the problem.

The nurse manager can actively participate in staff management by empowering nurses and providing appropriate direction and managerial support. It is performed as a means of supporting on-duty nurses, reducing potential threats to patient safety, and providing psychological support to enhance the emotional resilience of nurses.<sup>[8]</sup> Although the epidemic has transitioned into an endemic state, nurses persist in fulfilling their

responsibilities with enthusiasm, attentiveness, and a strong sense of dedication and professionalism. Nurses exhibit a sense of accountability and willingness to take on potential hazards while assisting others, to uphold ethical principles and the values of humanity.

## Conclusion

To enhance the integration and holistic nature of nursing care provided during a pandemic, it is imperative for nurses to enhance their psychosocial abilities, hence enabling them to deliver complete nursing care.

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## Conflicts of interest

Nothing to declare.

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