

StopCOVID: PIH'S Mental Health and Psychosocial Response

Mental Health Impacts of COVID-19

The greatest cause of disability globally is poor mental health, compounded by poverty, conflict, the effects of climate change, and most recently, the COVID-19 pandemic. This unprecedented global pandemic has significantly affected many people's mental health and restricted access to care for those with existing mental health conditions. The **mental health impacts of COVID-19** include everything from increased anxiety and fear about the spread of the virus, loss of social networks, stressful experiences of healthcare workers on the frontlines, to higher risk of substance misuse.

The **Partners In Health Cross-Site Mental Health program** is working to establish safe, effective, culturally sound mental health services as a fundamental piece of the care continuum during COVID-19. Our holistic approach to mental health and psychosocial response is rooted in the 5 S's of Partners In Health: **staff, stuff, space, systems, and social support**. We vow to not only stop COVID-19, but also to learn from this crisis as we continue **building back better** to strengthen health systems long-term.



Mental Health
Service Adaptations



Community
Outreach



Social Support



Partnerships



Capacity Building



Monitoring,
Evaluation, Quality
Improvement



Staff
Mental Health

Pillars of PIH'S Cross-Site Mental Health and Psychosocial Response to COVID-19



(left) The mental health team in *Chiapas, Mexico* conducts a mental health and psychological first aid training with health clinic nurses. Integration of mental health services across the health system and training of non-specialist providers is crucial to reaching the most vulnerable at the facility and community levels.

(right) Mental health team members in *Maryland County, Liberia* visit a patient and their family to discuss how best to support their ongoing mental health support and reintegration into the family. Teams quickly adapted their services by providing tele-psychotherapy and distribution of social support packages.



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Cross-Site Mental Health Learning Collaborative

The **PIH Cross-Site Mental Health Collaborative**, formalized in 2016, is a platform bringing colleagues and partners **across OnePIH** to address global mental health delivery challenges focusing on both increasing the reach and quality of services provided by health workers who can deliver **evidence-based, culturally adapted mental health care**, and ensuring that the health systems in which they work are equipped to support and manage the services they provide. During COVID-19, the Collaborative has expanded into a forum for colleagues across to share learnings and exchange resources on the mental health and psychosocial support response in their contexts through **regular convenings, a digital resource library, and virtual trainings**. Colleagues from around the world exchange implementation strategies on addressing mental health and psychosocial needs centered around the 7 pillars of the PIH Cross-Site Mental Health program's integrated COVID-19 response.

