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Prevalence of stress, anxiety and depression and their association with coping mechanisms among primary healthcare doctors in Petaling District, Selangor, during the transition to the endemic phase of COVID-19: A cross-sectional study

By

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Source**MALAYSIAN FAMILY PHYSICIAN**[← View Journal Impact](#)

Volume: 21

DOI: 10.51866/oa.686

Article Number

13

Published

2026

Indexed

2026-03-16

Document Type

Article

Abstract

Introduction: Following Malaysia's transition to the endemic phase of COVID-19, primary healthcare doctors (PHDs) experienced a substantial increase in workload , which combined with workforce shortages and continued exposure to infection risk, contributed to sustained psychological distress among PHDs. Assessing the mental health status and coping strategies of healthcare professionals during the recovery phase is essential to ensure the continuity of national healthcare services. Methods: This cross-sectional study assessed the prevalence of stress, anxiety and depression among PHDs in private and public primary care clinics in Petaling, Selangor. It also analysed the relationship between these mental health conditions and coping mechanisms over 5 months. Selfadministered questionnaires containing sociodemographic items, as well as English versions of the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale-21 (DASS-21) and Brief COPE were utilised. Multiple logistic regression was applied to determine the associated factors of depression, anxiety and stress. Results: A total of 230 participants were included. The median age was 35 years. The prevalence of depression, anxiety and stress was 28.7%, 23.0% and 20.4% respectively. Workplace conflict was significantly associated with higher odds of depression (AOR=2.497; 95% CI=1.230-5.070), anxiety (AOR=5.337; 95% CI=2.329-12.232) and stress (AOR=3.078; 95% CI=1.339-7.075). Avoidant coping strategies were associated with higher odds of depression (AOR=2.743; 95% CI=1.150-6.544) and anxiety (AOR=5.776; 95% CI=2.010-16.598). Conclusion: Current trends underscore the need to implement evidence-based coping strategies that directly address underlying factors contributing to depression and anxiety. Additional targeted

interventions are required to improve the mental health of physicians post COVID-19 pandemic.

Keywords

Author Keywords: [COVID-19](#); [Depression](#); [Anxiety](#); [Coping skills](#); [Primary healthcare](#)

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Data availability statement

The raw and analysed datasets of the current study are available from the corresponding author upon request.

Categories/ Classification

Research Areas: General & Internal Medicine

Citation [1 Clinical & Life](#) , [1.21](#) , [1.21.1179 Mindfulness](#)

Topics: [Sciences](#) [Psychiatry](#) and [Mental Health](#)

Sustainable Development Goals: [03 Good Health and Well-being](#)

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Funding agency

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Journal information

MALAYSIAN FAMILY PHYSICIAN

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ISSN1985-207X

eISSN1985-2274

Current PublisherACAD FAMILY PHYSICIANS MALAYSIA, Unit 1-5, Level 1 Enterprise 3B, Technol Park Malaysia, Jalan Innovasi 1, Kuala Lumpur 57000, MALAYSIA

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