

Mental Health Consequences of Ukraine War

The 2022 invasion of Ukraine is an important situation in the world at present. In general, war is an unfavorable situation that has many negative health consequences. In the Ukraine war, an emergent medical problem can be created [1]. When a disagreement exists, the core health-care system suffers. We would like to share some insights from Cambodia, an Indochina country that has been destroyed by a decade-long civil war (1970–1979). Military conflict has far-reaching ramifications in various areas, including clinical medicine. The exact prevalence of mental health problems is not available among local Indochina people during the war. But the occurrence of negative mental health consequences and impacts on the health-care system resulted from the war have been well recognized. Studies on the refugee community, suggest that the violence has had an impact. Victims of war, such as political refugees, concentration camp inmates, rape victims, and catastrophic personal losses (property or human lives) are among the traumatic etiologies (see the article “war and current disease outbreak” by R. Mungmunpantipantip and V. Wiwanitkit at www.science.org/doi/10.1126/ebfce567-cdc6-479e-adba-3751af31886b/full/). Posttraumatic stress disorder and depressive disorders, as well as the stress of war trauma, resettlement, and recent life events, are all frequently seen [2-4]. According to estimates, more than 90% of refugees from the Indochina conflict have suffered from one or more mental health problems [3].

The past civil war in Cambodia can serve as insights and a useful comparison to the current crisis in Ukraine because it accurately reflects both a foreign invasion and a protracted conflict within the nation. The existing state of affairs in Ukraine has already lasted for 4 months and may get longer and worse. Long-lasting local conflict may be well-reflected in the earlier long-lasting war inside Cambodia. Millions of refugees are also exiled from Cambodia to several nations. Clinical observations of health issues in Indochina refugee populations in the past can provide useful lessons for anticipating the current issue in Ukraine. The strategy to treat potential clinical illnesses, including mental health issues, among current Ukrainian immigrants may be modeled after earlier experiences in Indochina.

During the conflict, mental health issue receives little attention. During the previous war time in Cambodia, the only available health-care facility was a field hospital near the border with a neighboring country. The local field hospital mostly offered medical care for war-related injuries, but the mental health problems were poorly managed or ignored [5]. At the field hospital, little mental health screening is available and no access to specialized mental health services [5]. External international medical teams, who are mostly military medical personnel, give medical services mainly [6]. The majority of

clinical care is often provided for serious medical conditions and battler-related injuries. Minor issues, such as mental health illnesses, are generally disregarded [6].

Concerning refugees in the first host nations, they are typically regulated in a specialized refugee shelter area, which might be congested, and limited access exists to conventional treatment, especially mental healthcare [7]. Many refugees typically suffer from mental illnesses, and the overt issue and diagnosis are typically discovered after the refugees have already made their way to the new third nation [8]. Long-term mental health issues are widespread, and a targeted intervention into primary care for settled refugees is required. According to a recent report from the United States, depression and posttraumatic stress disorder are still major issues in primary care for traumatized resettled Cambodian immigrants who have lived in the new nation for the decades [9]. Mental health screening interventions using applied health information technology have been shown to be useful for early diagnosis and case management [8].

In the current Ukraine war which is comparable, these fundamental concerns are to be expected. To cope with the current crisis, international support is needed. Of several needs, mental healthcare support must be set as the first priority. The support should focus on both local people trapped in the war zone as well as those evacuated refugees to the third countries. Plans for dealing with the current issue as well as long-term effects are required. The refugees from Ukraine may be experiencing an increasing mental health issue that is not being properly diagnosed. To begin evaluating the refugees is vital for physical and mental health issues. A strategy for managing the mental health issue over the long term is required. Based on the lessons, we have learned from our experience in South-east Asia, despite the current state of peace, still many mental health effects exist from the war among the local population and among refugees moving to new third-world nations [9]. The current Ukraine war may follow a similar course, and there may be new mental health issues that arise as a result. To be ready to handle any potential event is necessary. Collaboration between foreign mental healthcare teams can be useful in managing the crisis and the urgent demand in Ukraine.

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