

MAINSTREAMING WOMEN'S HEALTH AMIDST A PANDEMIC LIKE COVID-19

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Health

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The plight of working women amid the COVID-19 pandemic, work from home scenario and lack of employer understanding and assistance, has made things challenging.

In the present circumstances as an impact of lockdown due to the pandemic, issues pertaining to domestic violence, mental agony and social neglect have grown, which takes a toll on women's health.

According to a recent poll conducted by ETimes lifestyle, 61% of women were more stressed than men during the lockdown in India. The reason behind this though is comparatively easy to comprehend as the absence of domestic helpers, commitments of office is calling for greater responsibility.

In one of the publications on women's issues in pandemic times by authors Innie Chen and Olga Bougie, they identified that there is a global emergency emerging as countries across the world are witnessing incidents of gender-based abuse rising from 25% to 33%. There has been increase in women's emergency shelters usage in Canada, and there has been a double rise in deaths from

domestic abuse recorded in the United Kingdom over two weeks. The unprecedented size of stay-at-home warnings may have exerted a heightened strain in household relationships and social alienation from friends, relatives, and support networks. As such, there is a more substantial need than ever for woman health care professionals to identify and aid women affected by gender-based abuse that they may experience in clinical practice. Moreover, in one of the recent surveys by Dee Ellen Fenner, MD, chair of the department of obstetrics and gynaecology at the University of Michigan, she concluded that women who did not attend routine health care appointments due to a pandemic may have long-term health effects due to missed cancer tests, failure of access to birth control and fertility care.

Effective communication, creating boundaries and sharing & taking responsibilities is extremely crucial at this point. An element of behaviour change communication with cross sectoral convergence of gender sensitive social protection needs being addressed will help the world heal faster and better.

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