



## Seminar A

# Mental Health Considerations during the COVID-19 Pandemic



### Dr. LAM Wing Wo

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*Family Doctor and Marriage and Family Therapist in Private Practice*

Dr. Lam has been involved in promoting health care across different stages of life via a family context and family well-being through care provision, public education and professional teaching. He is committed to empowering clinicians to improve patient care by applying a family-oriented clinical approach which integrates Family Medicine and Family Therapy



### Dr. Sunny K.S. LIU

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*Specialist in Psychiatry*

Dr. Liu is currently a specialist psychiatrist in private practice. He is also serving as the Honorary Clinical Associate Professor at Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine, HKU, Associate Director of the HKJC Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention, HKU, and Honorary Advisor and Lecturer of the Hong Kong Institute of Christian Counselors. His previous posts included Quality and Safety Director of the Hospital Authority, HKEC and Consultant Psychiatrist.

Dr. Liu specialises in clinical psychiatry, with particular focus on the management of stress, psychological health and suicide. His research interests include suicide, stress, anxiety, depression and healthcare management.

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected humanity unprecedentedly in many aspects. Our daily lives have become full of changes, uncertainties, adaptations and worries. The new realities of adoption of various infectious control measures, mask-wearing, on-line communications and meetings, working from home, temporary unemployment, home-schooling of children, restrictions in activities, being homebound with its lack of physical contact with other family members, friends and colleagues requires a lot of adjustments and can be significant stressors. Fear about contracting the virus, concerns about when and how the pandemic will be under control, and personal worries such as financial deterioration, job security, academic and career development can be detrimental for our health especially for our mental health. A local survey conducted between February to July 2020 found that more than 70% of respondents showed signs of moderate to severe depression and around 40% of respondents had symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder.

Primary care is the frontline of care for people in the community. Early detection and prompt treatment of mental health problems are crucial in these trying times. In this seminar, the common and important mental health conditions in the post-COVID-19 era will be discussed, as well as to engage individuals and their families to seek help and the practical issues in assessment and management in our primary care settings.