

Mini Review

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The Psychological Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Chinese Australians



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The pandemic of COVID-19 and its social and economic consequences are damaging mental health [1-5], and this is particularly true for Chinese Australians, who are the focus of this article. Australian Bureau of Statistics data [6] show that more than a half million Australian citizens were born in China [7,8]. The strong bilateral trade in goods and resources and the education of many thousands of Chinese students in Australia have long connected the two countries [9]. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has fundamentally changed the atmosphere.

In February 2020, many Chinese Australians and permanent residents were evacuated from Wuhan to Christmas Island, about 1,500 kilometres from the Western Australian coast, and forced to spend 14 days there in quarantine [10]. Shortly afterwards, all Chinese were banned from entering Australia [11]. These measures have separated Chinese Australians from their families and relatives in China, and caused some to close their businesses temporarily or permanently, leading to financial hardship or even bankruptcy, and raising rates of anxiety and depression. The worse came later. Racism specifically directed against Chinese Australians has thereafter significantly increased [12,13], and triggered fear and further anxiety and depression [14]. Notably, the abuse directed at Chinese Australians in person and on social media has generated anger and confusion, and affected their pride in identifying themselves as Australian citizens.

For all the reasons outlined above, the Chinese Australians are likely to be experiencing higher incidences of anxiety, depression

and self-harm as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. There has to date existed no data specific to this group. Hence, it is important to conduct qualitative and quantitative research on the mental health of the Chinese Australians to establish a benchmark and to guide them the development of resilience and coping strategies.

Author Contributions

LY and SXS take equal responsibility for concept and ideas, drafting of the manuscript, and critical revision of the manuscript for important intellectual content.

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