

**“Enhancing Interprofessional
Collaboration and Learning for
Strengthening Primary Health Care”**

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Title	THE STUDENTS’ EXPERIENCE WITH MENTAL HEALTH DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN A RURAL TOWN IN BRAZIL
Type	Oral Presentation <i>What can we learn from your Primary Health Care Practice and Experiences?</i>
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Abstract N ^o	TUFH634
Content	<p>Background: The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the occurrence of mental health disorders. Social isolation, monetary insecurity, and the undermining of social support systems are contributory factors to the emergence and worsening of mental illness. The relationship between mental health and the rural environment is related to several, well-studied factors, and the current situation acts as an additional stressor negatively impacting mental health. Methods: This abstract consists of a students’ report experience regarding practical clerkship activity in a rural community in Brazil. Results: During the clerkship in the emergency department (ED), the number of cases involving mental health was remarkable. The students attended many cases of panic attacks, anxiety symptoms, and suicidal intentions. Patients arrived concerned of being ill or in exacerbation of underlying mental diseases. Chronic use of benzodiazepines was very common, even in younger patients. The request for antipsychotic, opioid, and sedative prescriptions was common. Many people came to the ED due to the shortage of doctors in primary care, and in some cases, it was necessary to start long-term antidepressants in the ED. Conclusion: It was possible to observe the exacerbation of pre-existing mental illnesses and occurrence of anxiety attacks. We realize the importance of primary care and coordination of mental health care. Thus, it is important to consider the need for greater mental health care infrastructure in rural areas during and after the pandemic.</p>