



# COVID-19 webinar

## Implications for mental health



# Content

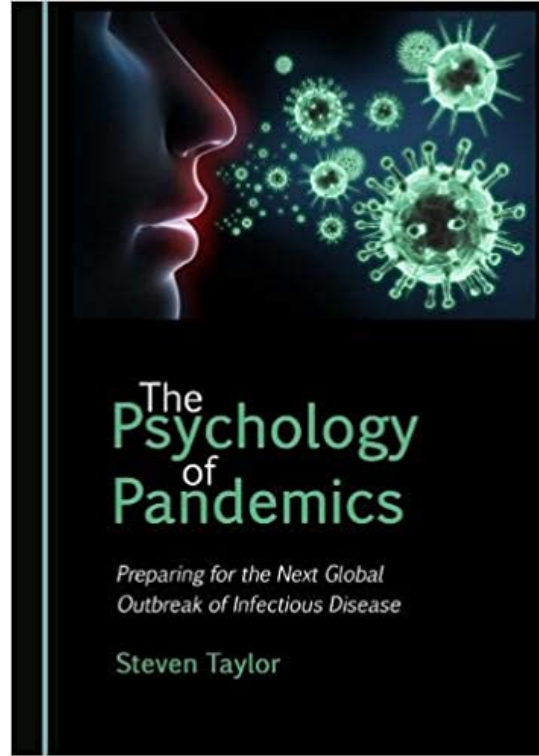
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# Introduction & background

- Koen Lowet
- Clinical psychologist – Psychotherapist
- EFPA: Executive Council member
  - EC – liaison for the SC Psychology & Health
  - EC – liaison for the SC Crisis, Disaster & Trauma
  - Ec – liaison for the PG on E - health
- Flemish Association of Clinical Psychologists, CEO
  - Member of the Federal Psycho – Social Coordination Committee
  - Co - founder of the online platform [www.dezorgsamen.be](http://www.dezorgsamen.be) (thecaretogether)
  - Flemish action plan on well – being
  - Member of the International COVID-19 group (APA)





# Pandemic influence on mental health



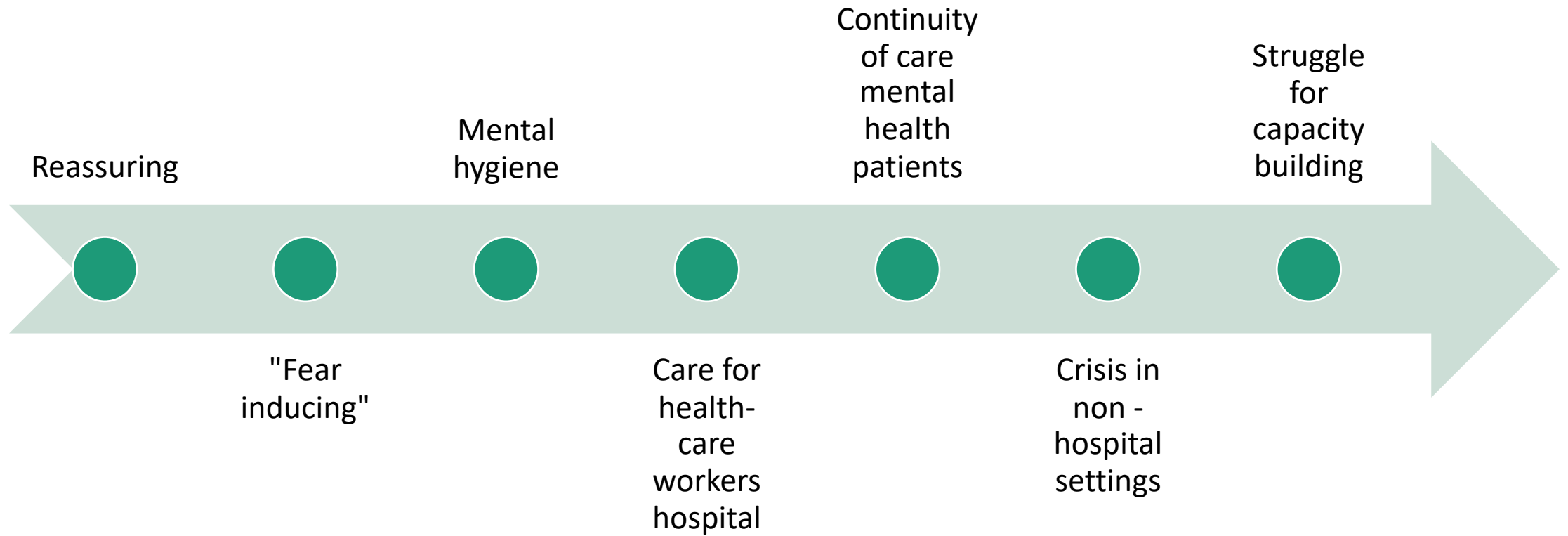


# Pandemic influence on mental health

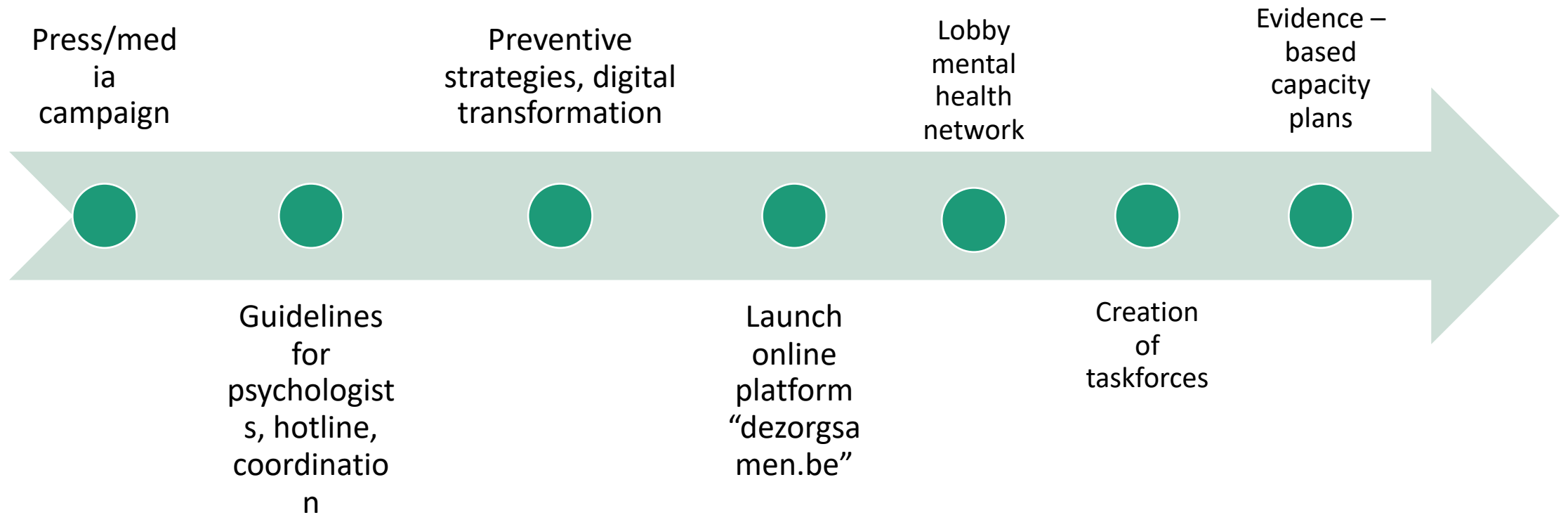
- Psychological impact of social isolation/quarantine
  - Symptoms of acute stress disorder
  - Predictor of post – traumatic stress
  - Long – term effects: depressive symptoms, dependency symptoms
- High risk groups:
  - Health – care workers
  - Mental health patients
- Prequarantine stressors: duration, fear of infection, frustration/boredom, inadequate supplies, inadequate information
- Post – quarantine stressors: finances, stigma



# Timeline



# Timeline



# Specific target groups for mental health

- Mental health patients
- Health – care workers
- Risk groups
- General population
- COVID-19 patients & families





# Mental health patients

- Continuity of care
  - Stop of all non – essential treatments
  - Relocating patients in hospital settings
  - Massive postponement of treatment (61 %) in primary care
  - Not everybody is doing worse
- Digital transformation
  - Good alternative (97 %)
  - Not for everybody (equity of care)
  - Guarantee that F2F consultation remains possible
  - Ideological opposition

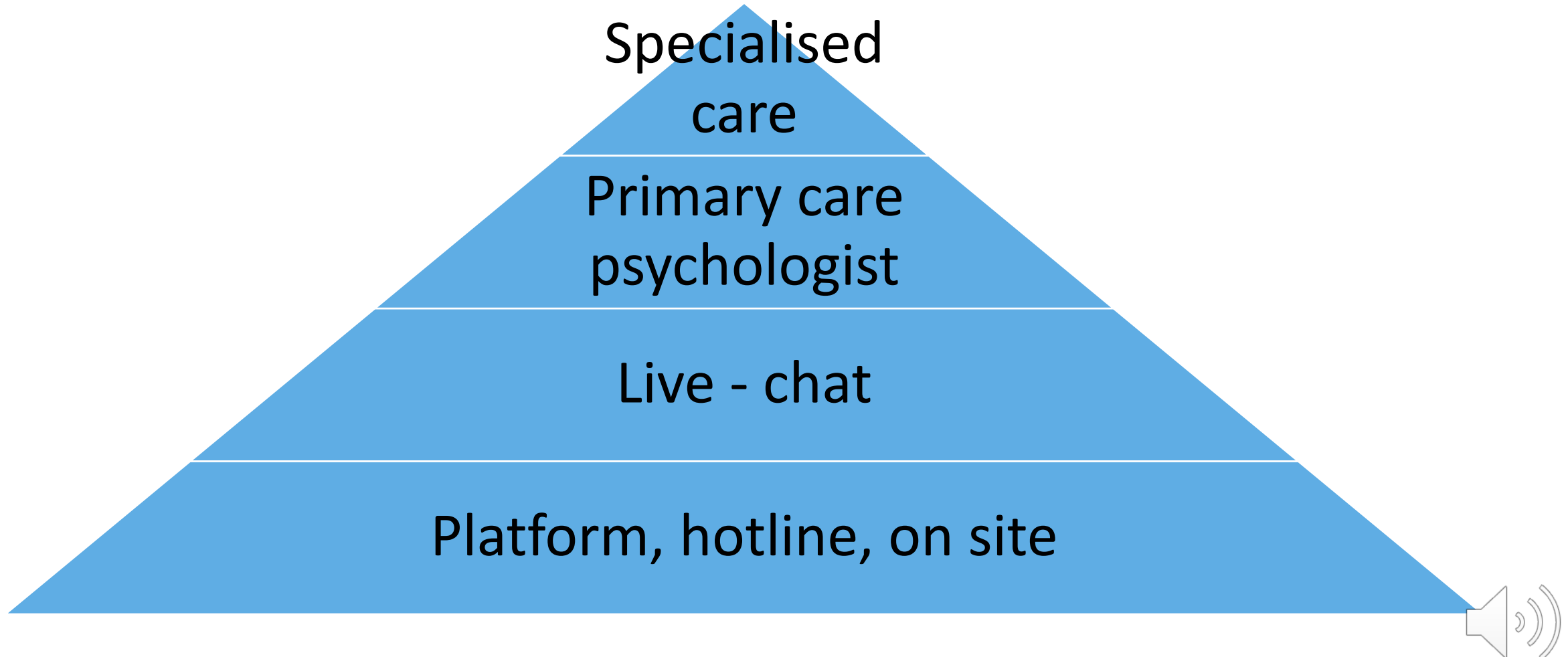


# Health-care workers

- Highly valued
- Specific groups
  - COVID-19 wards
  - Primary care
  - Elderly care home
- An online platform [thecaretogether.be](https://thecaretogether.be)
  - Stepped – care approach



# Health-care workers



# VEERKRACHT VOOR ZORGVERLENERS EN WELZIJNSWERKERS



Als je in de zorg- of welzijnssector werkt, geef je vandaag alles wat je hebt. Met hart en ziel, dag in dag uit. Op dit platform vind je tips om goed voor jezelf te zorgen, veerkracht bij te tanken en je collega's te ondersteunen. Ook voor directe hulp kan je hier terecht. Zo houden we ons ook mentaal fit. Zo zijn we samen De ZorgSamen.

## ZORG VOOR JEZELF: VUISTREGELS



Zorg voor regelmaat en voldoende rust.



Ken jezelf: vertrouw op wat jou eerder al hielp.



Ventileer: laat je emoties toe, ze horen erbij.



Volg de richtlijnen en betrouwbare informatie.

Herken signalen van overbelasting bij jezelf. Doe de check →





# Health – care workers

- Care survey (monthly basis)
  - Personal impact: stress, fatigue, anxiety, stigma
  - Professional impact: doubt, leaving the profession
  - Social support vs underuse of professional support
- Low demand of support (adrenaline phase)
- Special attention to the families of health – care workers
- Follow – up
  - Peer 2 Peer
  - Team dynamics
  - Flexible and modular offer of support



# Risk groups

- Elderly people and physical condition
- Problem of isolation and loneliness
  - Activation of network of watchful neighbours
- Specific issues in elderly care homes:
  - Severe depression
  - “They’ve given up on us”
- Deployment of mobile teams
  - Presence of psychosocial support
  - On site counseling
  - But: guidelines and absence of protective materials



# General population

- General elevation of stress: depression, anxiety
- Extrapolation of existing problems
- Combination of different roles
- Prevention: massive deployment of PFA strategies
  - Media campaigns
  - Daily tip of the national crisis center
- Need for capacity building: tsunami



# General population: screen-and-treat

Public announcement



Large scale screening



Clinical interview



Decision making

- Referral mental health specialist
- Psychoeducation/monitoring





# COVID-19 patients & families

- Admission to COVID-19 wards
  - Long - term revalidation
  - Unpredictability of the disease
  - Lack of support / uncertainty for families
  - Particular process of grief
- 
- Serious impact on the mental health



# General issues



## Take home messages

- Mental health is all about networking
- Behaviour is the lock for this crisis, psychology could be the key
- Capacity building: a tsunami is coming, better be prepared, marathon
  - Direct consequences of COVID-19
  - Indirect through the economic recess
- Mental health impact for all, but particular for our vulnerable groups



## Useful ressources

- EFPA COVID-19 hub
- Link to your national psychological association
- The psychology of pandemics, Steven Taylor
- The Lancet







# Thank you and good luck!

Questions & ...answers?

