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Stigmatization in the context of a pandemic: Implications for pandemic preparedness

Inhalt

Background: The COVID-19 pandemic was not only a global health crisis but also a catalyst for stigmatization processes. In the BMFTR-funded “StiPEX” project, we integrate qualitative and quantitative methods to conduct a comprehensive analysis of these stigmatization processes and develop anti-stigma guidelines and toolkits for pandemic preparedness.

Methods: Through systematic reviews, we compiled existing measurement tools for assessing stigmatization related to COVID-19, infectious diseases as well as interventions in this context.

To evaluate individual experiences of stigmatization during the pandemic, we conducted interviews with various target groups: 1) healthcare workers, 2) psychotherapists, 3) the general public, and 4) patients with Long COVID. The interviews were analyzed using qualitative content analysis.

In addition, we conducted a representative population survey in three waves to assess public and internalized stigma regarding COVID-19-related topics (e.g., COVID-19 infection, Long COVID).

Results / Discussion: Based on our findings, we derive practical recommendations for action and communication aimed at policymakers and public health professionals. The goal is to shape and promote anti-stigma efforts and stigma research in the context of infectious diseases over the long term and foster pandemic preparedness.

Keywords

stigma, public health, prevention, social sciences, pandemic preparedness

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Professional Status of the Speaker

Professor

Junior Scientist Status

No, I am not a Junior Scientist.

Autor: Herr TOMCZYK, Samuel (Universitätsmedizin Rostock)

Co-Autoren: Frau DANQA, Dafina (Universitätsmedizin Rostock); Frau MENZINGER, Jule (Universität Greifswald); Frau STRANZKY, Rena (Universität Greifswald); Frau MÜHLMANN, Marlene (Universität Greifswald); Frau KUHLMANN, Isabel (Universität Greifswald); Frau ALPERS, Carlotta (Universität Greifswald)

Vortragende(r): Herr TOMCZYK, Samuel (Universitätsmedizin Rostock)

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Eingereicht von **Herr TOMCZYK, Samuel** <samuel.tomczyk@med.uni-rostock.de> am **Montag, 29. Juni 2026**