

Response to the Letter: Acute Psychological Impact of Coronavirus in a Non-COVID Palliative Patient

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The authors have brought up a very important and often overlooked area of concern in this Letter to the Editor. Cancer patients who are not COVID positive often show higher levels of fear response, as it is believed that these patients with lower immunity could develop more severe symptoms if infected by the virus. However, an interesting research finding from Germany, published in the *Journal of Cancer Medicine* states that on the contrary, most cancer patients who get infected are asymptomatic. The suppression of the immune system's response capability reduces the severity of the disease.¹

During my work at the Trauma Psychology service in the Trauma Surgery section of the Hamad Medical Corporation, I have come across many such cases where fear of contracting COVID-19 has even led patients to attempt suicide. The same fear was also observed among non-COVID positive health professionals, including Trauma Physicians and Nursing staff during de-briefing sessions conducted following their deputation to specialized treatment facilities dealing with COVID-19 patients.²

I believe media is a great influencer when it comes to people's perception of any disease and how it could affect them. In my view, media could help in building healthy perceptions by bringing out information that could lower the psychological impact of any such pandemic outbreak.

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