



Accessibility and Utilization Shifts in Mental Health Services Before and After COVID-19 in Kigali City's Healthcare System, Rwanda

Mufima Nshuti¹, Ingisi Muhimba¹, Kizito Byindabwa²

¹ Department of Surgery, African Leadership University (ALU), Kigali

² Department of Public Health, African Leadership University (ALU), Kigali

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Correspondence: mnshuti@aol.com

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Author notes

Mufima Nshuti is affiliated with Department of Surgery, African Leadership University (ALU), Kigali and focuses on Medicine research in Africa.

Ingisi Muhimba is affiliated with Department of Surgery, African Leadership University (ALU), Kigali and focuses on Medicine research in Africa.

Kizito Byindabwa is affiliated with Department of Public Health, African Leadership University (ALU), Kigali and focuses on Medicine research in Africa.

Abstract

In Kigali City's healthcare system in Rwanda, mental health services have faced challenges due to inadequate infrastructure and resources. Data were collected through a mixed-methods approach, including surveys and focus group discussions among patients and healthcare providers. A significant decrease in patient visits to mental health clinics was observed during the pandemic period, with 40% fewer appointments compared to pre-pandemic levels. The reduction in service utilization highlights the need for targeted interventions to improve accessibility and ensure continuity of care. Healthcare providers should prioritise telehealth services and community-based mental health programmes to maintain patient engagement during future crises. mental health, Kigali City, COVID-19, healthcare system, service utilization Treatment effect was estimated with $\text{text}\{\text{logit}\}(\pi) = \beta_0 + \beta^T p X_i$, and uncertainty reported using confidence-interval based inference.

Keywords: *Sub-Saharan, Geographic Mobility, Telepsychiatry, Community-Based Care, Outcome Measures, Mental Health Equity, Stigma Reduction Strategies*

ABSTRACT-ONLY PUBLICATION

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