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“Elderly people (60+) as a special social group in need of help amid the pandemic”

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Elderly people are discriminated amid the pandemic. Most of the people who got infected and died are the elderly


IT IS IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND

Elderly people are discriminated amid the pandemic due to the age peculiarities, resource limitations, and political attitudes.

Most of the people who got infected and died during the 2020 pandemic are elderly people!

People at the age of 60+ may face problems of loneliness, loss of regular social contacts, etc.





Social immunity is the ability of individuals to resist external social, political and epidemiological threats connected with penetration of destructive social phenomena, values and patterns into the social organism, for example, forced lockdown, a long-term latent emergency situation with a lack of clear prospects for the development of society and the social system in general



conscientious strengthening of social ties

organic social solidarity

elimination of age discrimination

rational building, forecasting and modeling of one's life at all levels

AGISM – is discrimination of a person on the basis of their age



Exacerbation and non-treatment of existing chronic and other diseases



RISKS AND SOCIAL DEFORMATIONS faced by elderly people all over the world during the 2020 pandemic



Destruction of social ties



Suicidal phenomena

Social workers did not have the opportunity to help all the elderly people that were in need of help; they were often forced to decide independently to whom they could help and to who could not

Lockdown

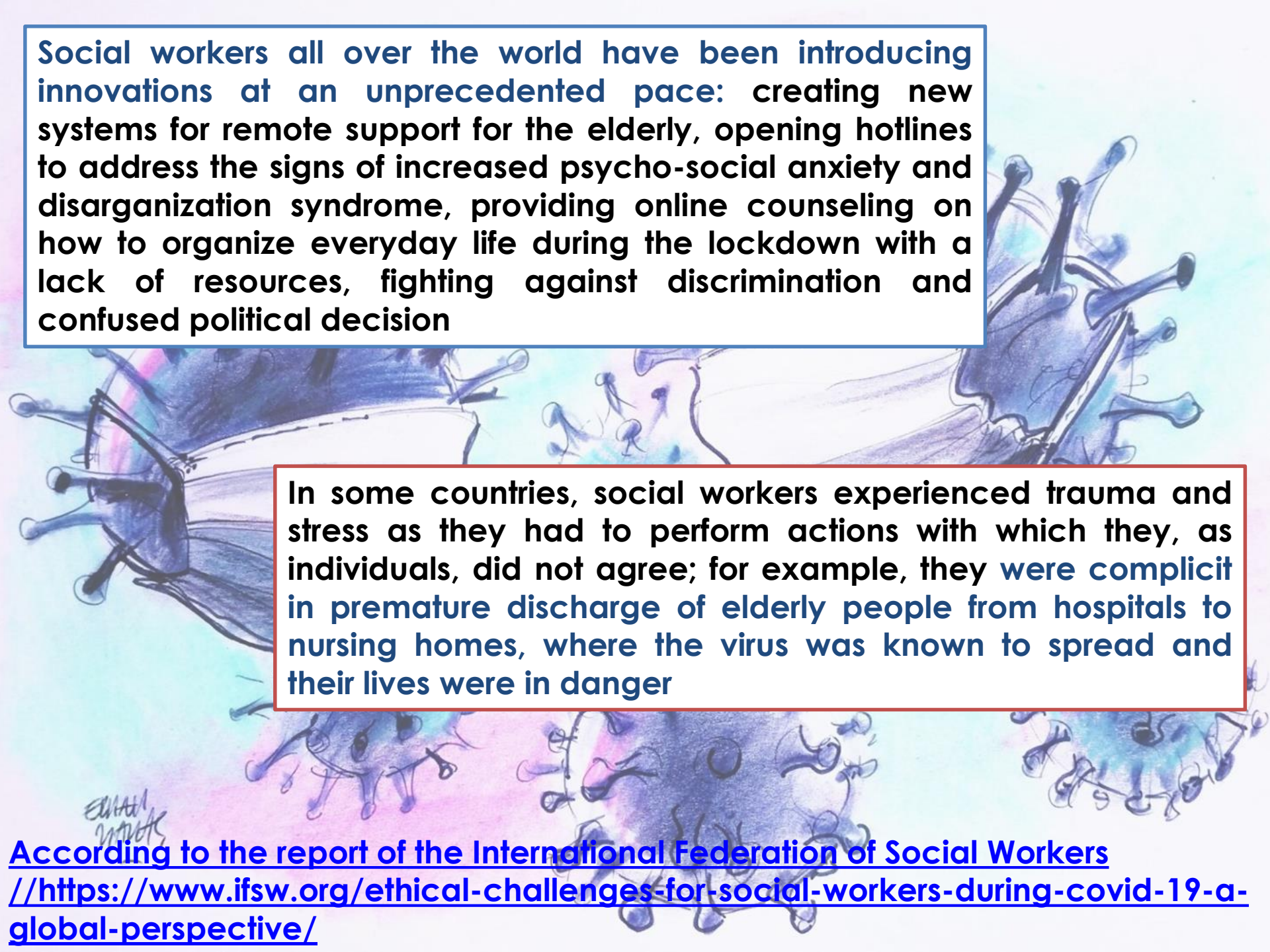




ALL social services of **ALL** the countries worked at the limit of their capabilities, both industrial and human



- ❖ ensuring self-isolation;
- ❖ providing the necessary food, medicine, etc.;
- ❖ providing psychological assistance, support;
- ❖ communication **and much, much more**



Social workers all over the world have been introducing innovations at an unprecedented pace: creating new systems for remote support for the elderly, opening hotlines to address the signs of increased psycho-social anxiety and disorganization syndrome, providing online counseling on how to organize everyday life during the lockdown with a lack of resources, fighting against discrimination and confused political decision

In some countries, social workers experienced trauma and stress as they had to perform actions with which they, as individuals, did not agree; for example, they were complicit in premature discharge of elderly people from hospitals to nursing homes, where the virus was known to spread and their lives were in danger

<https://www.ifsw.org/ethical-challenges-for-social-workers-during-covid-19-a-global-perspective/>

Some examples of specific problems faced by social workers during the pandemic:

- *In Hong Kong, despite social distancing rules, social workers at a community service center have decided to reopen some groups and programs for elderly people whose health and well-being have deteriorated due to social isolation caused by a lack of social contacts. Older social workers chose to serve as role models and take the lead in home visits, and after seeing such an example, other social workers felt comfortable participating in the provision of services.*
- *In South Africa, social workers noted that many elderly people have unsanitary living conditions, especially in rural areas, lack of communication (Internet, telephone devices, wired communication) made it very difficult to provide social assistance during the pandemic*

In many countries, the virus outbreak has exposed weaknesses in underfunded and undervalued social services. We believe that all countries should analyze and carefully track both the positive lessons of the pandemic and the negative ones, all this remains important in the post-pandemic context

Final points:

1. Elderly people are a vulnerable social group; they are discriminated on the basis of age. And during emergencies, elderly people may be limited in their rights to receive assistance

2. The 2020 pandemic has intensified such phenomena inherent in elderly people as fear of death, uselessness and a feeling of being burdened with their existence, decreased motivation for an active and productive life, and suicidal thoughts

3. Positive results of the pandemic:

- modern means of communication, video and telephone communication allowed elderly people to maintain social connections, contacts and even expand them. Many of them have mastered online stores, modern telephones, etc.;
- those people who have a high level of self-organization and stable social immunity have coped with this challenge the best;
- those elderly people who had warm relations with children, relatives, and neighbors, turned out to be successful; this helped a lot during the lockdown;
- social workers, who were able to restructure their activities, actively help the elderly using remote forms, online services and platforms brought the greatest benefits and results.

**THANK YOU
FOR YOUR
ATTENTION**

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