

# Interpersonal Communication Patterns of Health Personnel and Family of Covid-19 Survival Patients at Bunda Thamrin General Hospital, Medan

Arief Marizki\* , and Munzaimah Masril

University of Northern Sumatra

\*Corresponding author. Email: [munzaimah.m@usu.ac.id](mailto:munzaimah.m@usu.ac.id)

## ABSTRACT

The Covid-19 pandemic has affected all aspects of people's lives, ranging from; political, economic, social to health. The health aspect is the most impactful problem because it relates to the number of survivors and fatalities caused by the exponential spread of the Covid-19 virus. This means that the readiness of hospitals, the number of health workers, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to medicines are the main in the effort to heal every Covid-19 survivor, both physically and psychologically. Technically the main challenge for every hospital that is a Covid-19 referral 19 relates to the readiness of health infrastructure and health personnel resources in each treatment process and patient recovery efforts. The Bunda Thamrin General Hospital (RSU) is one of the referral hospitals that accepts many Covid-19 survivors in Medan City. Where the number of Covid-19 victims in Medan City since it was first announced until March 8, 2021 is 13100 with details 11401 recovered and 422 died. The success of interpersonal communication between health workers and the families of Covid-19 survivors is a very important part in efforts to avoid misunderstandings. Good for the integrity of information that can be understood, shared multiperception perceptions, compliance with the instructions given to minimizing conflicts that could arise between the hospital and the families of Covid-19 survivors at the Bundha Thamrin General Hospital in Medan. The purpose of this study was to explain the importance of interpersonal communication in hospital health services. Then, describe the pattern of interpersonal communication between health workers and families of Covid-19 survivors at Bunda Thamrin General Hospital Medan. This research is a qualitative study with interviews as primary data and books and journals as secondary data.

**Keywords:** *interpersonal communication, Covid-19 pandemic, health communication.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic has affected all aspects of people's lives, ranging from; political, economic, social to health. The health aspect is the most impactful problem because it relates to the number of survivors and fatalities caused by the exponential spread of the Covid-19 virus. This means that the readiness of hospitals, the number of health workers, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to medicines are the main things in an effort to heal every Covid-19 survivor, both physically and psychologically[2].

Technically, the main challenge for every hospital that is a referral for Covid-19 is related to the readiness

of health infrastructure and health personnel resources in every treatment process and patient recovery efforts. [1] Not only that, the hospital also has a reciprocal two-way relationship with patients and families of Covid-19 survivors in every healing process [1]. Of course there is an inseparable relationship with relationships that understand each other so that there are no misunderstandings, differences in perception and comfort between hospitals and families of Covid-19 survivors[7].

The Bunda Thamrin General Hospital (RSU) is one of the referral hospitals that accepts many Covid-19 survivors in Medan City. Where the number of victims of Covid-19 in the city of Medan since it was first

announced until March 8, 2021 is 13100 with details 11401 recovered and 422 died.[15]. Every day at least 200-250 Covid-19 patients are treated in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and isolation treatment rooms which are located on the 5th and 6th Floors at Bunda Thamrin General Hospital.

With the consequence that Covid-19 patients cannot meet directly with the patient's family to avoid the massive spread of the virus (Kompas.com, 2020). Of course, a good pattern of communication is needed about the condition of the patient and his family, especially for patients in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) regarding health conditions, development and healing of patients who have comorbidities. Not only that, for patients who are in isolation rooms, between health workers and the families of Covid-19 survivors, there is a communication pattern if the families of the survivors want to send food, drinks or vitamin supplements.

The success of interpersonal communication between health workers and families of Covid-19 survivors is a very important part in efforts to avoid misunderstandings [5]. Good for the integrity of information that can be understood, the common perception of multiperception, adherence to the instructions given to minimize conflicts that can arise between the hospital and the families of survivors. Furthermore, simply interpersonal communication is communication between people who meet face to face, allowing each participant to capture the reactions of others directly, either verbally or non-verbally [11].

One of the challenges at Bunda Thamrin General Hospital Medan in every healing of Covid-19 patients in healing cannot be separated from the calmness of health workers at work while the families of survivors also get complete information about the patient's condition through efficient and effective interpersonal communication. Based on the background above, the research entitled: "Patterns of interpersonal communication between health workers and families of Covid-19 survivors at Bunda Thamrin General Hospital Medan" are important to implement.

## **2. RESEARCH METHOD**

The writing of this article uses a descriptive analytical research method with a qualitative approach. The use of this method is intended, referring to (Creswell, 2016) Researchers can focus on related phenomena Interpersonal communication patterns of health workers and families of Covid-19 survivors at Bunda Thamrin General Hospital Medan. then describe the facts about the problem under investigation. This method will help researchers to understand the reality that occurs in the field. Research data collection is also carried out through a process of reviewing the results of interviews as primary data for the parties involved in

communication patterns inBunda Thamrin General Hospital Medan between the families of survivors and health workers. Then the secondary data of this research was obtained by the authors from journals, books and documents or reports related to the research focus. The researcher then analyzed the case phenomenon inductively regarding communication patterns, forms of communication and conceptual communication models for the sake of improving communication patterns in hospitals during the Covid-19 pandemic.

## **3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **3.1. Covid-19 in Medan City**

The Covid-19 pandemic has had an impact on many aspects, ranging from social, cultural, political, economic and health. Life that was previously almost without distance now requires every human being to maintain physical distance in order to avoid the spread of the virus from expanding and taking many victims.

This situation occurs in almost all parts of Indonesia, including the city of Medan, which is overwhelmed in handling the Covid-19 pandemic which has an impact on the situation becoming unhealthy. The loss of job opportunities, declining state revenues and increasing unemployment rates require the Medan City government to formulate all appropriate policies in an effort to overcome the Covid-19 pandemic. Moreover, the increasing number of patients in hospitals has forced the Medan City government to innovate in order to avoid the increasing number of victims infected with Covid-19 in hospitals in Medan City.

The Bunda Thamrin General Hospital (RSU) is one of the referral hospitals that accepts many Covid-19 survivors in Medan City. Where the number of Covid-19 victims in Medan City since it was first announced until March 8, 2021 is 13100 with details of 11401 recovered and 422 died. Every day at least 200-250 Covid-19 patients are treated in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and isolation treatment rooms which are located on the 5th and 6th Floors at Bunda Thamrin General Hospital.

The spread of the Covid-19 infectious disease in Medan City is not only influenced by specific pathogenic factors, it is also influenced by population structure and population mobility as social vulnerabilities in dealing with disease outbreaks, including: population density, poverty, socio-economic activities outside the home, and inter-city travel. city. In addition, the existence of dense settlements in Medan City with poor environmental hygiene and sanitation can also increase the vulnerability index to this disease outbreak. The high concentration of population in the city of Medan, especially in the central part of the city which has dense informal settlements, can become an

epicenter of disease transmission and accelerate its spread.

In addition, social inequality and poverty can also significantly increase individual vulnerability to infection in Medan City. Therefore, in addition to population density, other variables that are measured as population characteristics that influence the spread of infectious diseases are the sex ratio, the percentage of the population of vulnerable age, the percentage of the poor, and the human development index. During the Covid-19 pandemic, since the announcement of the first case, there has been a decline in community travel activities in Medan City

The number of residents is directly correlated to the spread of Covid-19 in the city of Medan, indicating that the large number of residents in an area is not the main factor influencing the spread of this pandemic, but rather from the way of interaction between individuals in the community. The human development index in Medan City has a strong correlation and must be considered in dealing with similar non-natural disasters in Medan City in overcoming the level of transmission, and also increasing morbidity and mortality in Medan City.

### ***3.2. Communication Challenges in Hospitals***

During one year of the spread of Covid-19 in Medan City, almost all hospitals have received patients infected with this outbreak. During the Covid-19 disaster, it is commonplace to assume that every community feels in danger, panics, and is afraid when in a crowd. Everyone tries to defend themselves selfishly and potentially endangers everyone's survival.

This happened at the beginning of the pandemic, where many people received misinformation, especially regarding hospitals, whether it was room supplies, masks to medicines by spending as much as possible without thinking about other people. These are just a few examples of communication challenges during the Pandemic.

This is of course, apart from that there are some people who take advantage of this to extract economic benefits from the disaster. Psychologically, what can trigger panic buying during the COVID-19 pandemic is influenced by anticipatory anxiety about price increases, flocks or groups and inciting media exposure or rumors of scarcity of goods.

During this Covid-19 pandemic emergency situation, every hospital carried out socialization regarding behavioral changes following policies related to communication between patients and survivors' families. This is adjusted to government policies ranging from: Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB), new normal, the implementation of emergency

Community Activity Restrictions (PPKM) to the Enforcement of Community Activity Restrictions (PPKM) levels 1-4. In line with this policy, the socialization of the health protocol, namely the 3 M (wearing a mask, washing hands and keeping a distance) is the focus of every institution for activities.

For approximately one year the Covid-19 pandemic has occurred in the city of Medan. There is some hoax information circulating related to activities related to the capacity and capability of the hospital. This situation occurs in line with many activities carried out through online media so that information about hospitals is misused because of limited physical meetings.

This means that during this crisis period, the problems faced by the Hospital in Medan are not only related to the pandemic but also related to technical and service-related work activities. Dissemination of information during the Covid-19 pandemic has become a critical communication strategy for every hospital in the city of Medan. Not only in conveying information about Covid-19, especially regarding the threat of danger, methods of transmission, methods of prevention, treatment services, and the prevention of hoax information to be carried out by hospitals,

However, it must produce and disseminate more specific information about hospital service products. In addition, through socialization, hospitals in the city of Medan educate about ways to prevent hoaxes and ensure that the delivery of information related to Covid-19 emergency services and situations is able to reach vulnerable groups so that in each process no information is left behind.

In this information dissemination process, the role of hospital public relations is to involve various parties who have the authority to facilitate the information dissemination process. This extensive involvement is so that information about the pandemic and hospital policies during times of crisis is more accurate, effective and understandable to the families of survivors.

The image of the hospital in handling Covid-19 greatly affects the level of dedication to patients, if the image is good it will get success for the hospital, on the contrary if the image is bad it will make the company shunned by its customers. The response and desire of a patient to the hospital also depends on the image of the hospital. The image will change a different perception of the hospital with other hospitals will also be assessed by a patient. Image also affects the feelings of an employee, an employee feels proud and is also appreciated if he works for a company that has a good name. That way employees will want to develop their work performance with special services.

### **3.3. Patient and Health Workers Communication Pattern**

One of the keys in handling Covid-19 at Bunda Thamrin General Hospital Medan is to build effective communication between doctors and patients, a good relationship is needed between the two, a good relationship between doctors and patients is the key to creating effective communication and is a very important element in health services. In carrying out his duties to serve patients who are suffering, a doctor is not only armed with knowledge and technical abilities but also must have the ability to understand human nature, because patients are humans from various backgrounds when experiencing suffering there is a sense of worry and hope to recover by seeking healing from the service. health that he believed in.

Through the good relationship that was established between the health workers of Bunda Thamrin General Hospital Medan and the families of Covid-19 survivors, there were also many cases where good relations occurred between doctors and patients in the health services that were passed, such as accurate diagnosis and better treatment. effectiveness depends directly on the good relationship.

Then the existence of effective communication at Bunda Thamrin General Hospital Medan also creates trust and has a beneficial impact for both. Health workers need complete and accurate data regarding the condition and pain felt by patients to determine the right diagnosis, so that it is easier for health workers at Bunda Thamrin General Hospital Medan to get information from patients because there is a good relationship between the two. For the patient's own family, when good relationships are established and effective communication has been established, it can reduce uncertainty and create comfort during the process.

Communication between health workers at Bunda Thamrin General Hospital Medan and the families of survivors of Covid-19 patients is usually done through interviews so that doctors can diagnose the patient's illness correctly, interviews in this health service function in the short-term and long-term treatment process, interviews conducted Health workers at Bunda Thamrin General Hospital Medan with patients also resulted in a better relationship between the two, and could motivate the families of the survivors to take treatment.

The information on the family of the survivor must of course have a more detailed description of the patient's complaint, not only that but also with facts that are in accordance with the current health history, past medical history, and personal history of the Covid-19 survivor. Usually the families of Covid-19 survivors at Bunda Thamrin General Hospital Medan come to the doctor with one or a number of complaints brought and

the problem must be solved by the doctor who is visited by the patient's family. The task of the health workers at Bunda Thamrin General Hospital Medan is to translate in easy-to-understand language the complaints submitted and make a diagnosis of the patient's illness so that problems can be resolved.

Communication is needed that aims to prevent disease and obtain basic data so that it can be used for evaluation later when needed. Along with the times, there are many new media that can be used in communication activities, one of which is online media.

In the midst of the current covid-19 pandemic, online media, online activities at Bunda Thamrin General Hospital Medan are very widely used in communication activities, various important activities are carried out online. So that all patients who are treated at the Bunda Thamrin General Hospital in Medan can use online health service communication media so that they can help the community to detect complaints of illness in a short time. The online application at Bunda Thamrin General Hospital Medan is also available 24 hours a week, so patients can use it whenever needed and can directly interact with the selected doctor.

The communication pattern carried out by health workers at Bunda Thamrin General Hospital Medan to the patient's family is to use an interpersonal communication pattern, where only doctors and patients communicate in the message room. all decisions taken regarding the solution to health problems are only made by the doctor without any third party so that the patient can communicate whatever he feels comfortable with during a consultation session with the family of the survivor patient with the Bunda Thamrin General Hospital Medan.

## **4. CONCLUSION**

Interpersonal communication allows people to communicate between health workers at Bunda Thamrin General Hospital Medan and the families of Covid-19 survivors to avoid misunderstandings regarding the handling of patients. The health workers of Bunda Thamrin General Hospital Medan and the patient's family are connected through direct and face-to-face communication, but everything needed to communicate between the two is only done online. Health workers at Bunda Thamrin General Hospital Medan and patients who are connected regularly have never had consultations outside of the agreement provided that everything that needs to be communicated is sufficient in carrying out various daily activities. Although the communication process cannot be separated from obstacles or disturbances, Likewise, when communicating with the other person we often get various obstacles that make the communication

effectiveness less effective. Likewise, the communication carried out by the Bunda Thamrin General Hospital in Medan and the families of survivors in communicating face-to-face only faced many obstacles because the number of patients in the March 2020-March 2021 period was very high.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Chen Q, Liang M, Li Y, Guo J, Fei D, Wang L, et al. (2020) Mental health care for medical staff in China during the COVID-19 outbreak. *Lancet Psychiatry* 2020;7:e15e6.
- [2] Dong, L., Hu, S., & Gao, J. (2020). Discovering drugs to treat coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). *Drug Discoveries & Therapeutics*, 14(1), 58–60. doi:10.5582/ddt.2020.01012
- [3] Ghotbi B, Navkhasi S, Ghobadi S, Shahsavari Z, Kahrizi N. (2020). *Hospital Management Strategies during the Covid-19 Pandemic*. pp.118-125 URL: <http://hrjbaq.ir/article-1-424-en.html>
- [4] Gregory Ezeah. (2020). Measuring the effect of interpersonal communication on awareness and knowledge of COVID-19 among rural communities in Eastern Nigeria. *Health Education Res.* 2020 Oct 1:35(5):481-489. doi: 10.1093/her/cyaa033.
- [5] Huang C, Wang Y, Li X, Ren L, Zhao J, Hu Y, et al. *Clinical features of patients infected with 2019 novel coronavirus in Wuhan, China. The Lancet.* 2020;395(10223):497-506. DOI: 10.1016/s0140-6736(20)30183-5
- [6] Kaur B (2020) Interpersonal communications in nursing practice - Key to Quality Health care. *Arch Nurs Pract Care* 6(1): 019-022. DOI: 10.17352/2581-4265.000044
- [7] M. Zhang et al. (2020), Knowledge, attitude, and practice regarding COVID-19. *among healthcare workers in Henan, China*, *Journal of Hospital Infection*, p.105. g). *Journal of Hospital Infection journal* homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/jhin](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/jhin). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhin.2020.04.012>
- [8] Ow Yong, LM, Xin, X., Wee, JML et al. Perception survey of crisis and emergency risk communication in an acute hospital in the management of COVID-19 pandemic in Singapore. *BMC Public Health* 20, 1919 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-020-10047-2>
- [9] Parsons, Talcott. 1949, *The Structure of Social Action*, New York: Macmillan Publishing and the Free Press.
- [10] Thobaitya, Al, Abdullelah & Farhan Alshammarib. (2020). Nurses on the Frontline against the COVID-19 Pandemic: An Integrative Review. DOI: 10.1159/000509361
- [11] Patriana, Eva, (2014), Interpersonal Communication That Takes place between Supervisors . *Societies and Families of Children of Criminal Perpetrators at the Surakarta Fathers' Court*, *Journal of Rural and Development* Volume V No. August 2, 2014.
- [12] Pasaribu, Brian Sepnatus, Destanal Aulia & Kintoko Rochadi. (2019). Effect of Doctor's. *Interpersonal Communication on Patient Satisfaction at Royal Prima General Hospital Medan*. *International Journal of Research & Review* (www.ijrrjournal.com) 162 Vol.6;Issue: 11; November 2019
- [13] Yolanda Raquel Lapena-Moñux. (2014). Interpersonal relationships among hospital nurses and the use of communication skills. <https://doi.org/10.1590/0104-07072014002010013>
- [14] Nur Rohmi Aida's article which has been published on Kompas.com with the title "What Congenital Diseases Are Most Suffered by Covid-19 Patients in Indonesia?", Click to read: <https://www.kompas.com/tren/read/2020/05/02/161500565/disease-bawaan-apa-saja-yang-many-diderita-patient-covid-19-di-indonesia?page=all>. seen on March 8, 2021 at 18.30 WIB
- [15] General Data Regarding Covid-19 Medan City [https://covid19.pemkomedan.go.id/index.php?page=stat\\_medan](https://covid19.pemkomedan.go.id/index.php?page=stat_medan) seen on March 8, 2021 at 18.00 WIB