

# Multi-Professional Involvement in Managing a COVID-19 crisis in Sri Lanka

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## Introduction

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in December 2019, a tumultuous period for health care systems was marked globally and Sri Lanka was in it as well because the health systems had to respond to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. In Sri Lanka, many professions altered their departments of working, in order to support patients while managing the COVID-19 crisis as well. In this paper, how the members from various professional groups came together in order to manage the COVID-19 pandemic, is discussed.

## What is multi-professional team- work?

In the field of management and organizational science, the concept of teamwork is suggested as the best in stable conditions where people have time and resources to learn how to work collaboratively. Teamwork is characterized by coordinating the expertise available. There is a wide variety of terms used to depict the cooperative and collaborative work of various health professional groups (Finn, Learmonth and Reedy, 2010). The words with the prefix

'multi' denote several variegated professional groups working collectively (Payne, 2000). A concern for various professional groups, functions and activities, which are associated with the groups is suggested by the word 'professional' (Payne, 2000). In consideration of the multidisciplinary/multi-professional workings, there are multiple definitions. Fundamentally, all these definitions explain a group of individuals who belong to distinct professional groups or varying disciplines within a particular working group, working collectively. Petrie (1976) defined multi-professionals working as a collection of people from varying health and social care professions but who do not necessarily interact. A broad array of health professional groups, with different knowledge, skills and qualifications, getting together within a particular structure will ensure the provision of health promotion services (Solheim, Memory and Kimm, 2007). According to Martin and Henderson (2001), a team is identified as a group possessing a common goal or task, in which the pursuit requires coordination and collaboration of the activities of its members, who have constant and persistent interactions among each other.

Teamwork is essential for the optimal performance level in a health sector (Clark, Dunbar, Ayock, Blanton and Wolf, 2009). Collaboration is identified as a means of bringing together strengths of numbers of people and organizations, leading them on to make better decisions; the outcomes of collective working (Jansen, 2008). Naidoo and Wills (2000), stated that teamwork increases knowledge and understanding of each other in the organizations and thereby helping them to clarify their roles while overcoming rivalry of each other within the organization. The

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*The Organisation Of Professionals Associations Of Sri Lanka (OPA)*

*Volume 11, Issue 1*