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Mental health COVID Impact, Vaccine Listening Session

I've highlighted the [mental health tragedies](#) emanating from COVID for all ages and all professions. This [report from Wuhan](#) highlights the emotional toll where it all started:

“Another woman had spent days begging for an ambulance — at that time private cars were also barred from Wuhan’s streets — for her father, but once it came she could not get him a hospital bed. She brought him home, where he lay on the first floor because she didn’t have the strength to carry him up the stairs. “He passed away there in front of her. She was making congee for him,” Xu said. “She didn’t get to say good bye.” To ease such trauma may take years. It is easier for many of Wuhan’s residents to block memories of the darkest days. There is also a shortage of good psychologists.”

For myself, I have a constant sense of dread over me; this pandemic gnaws. One of my patients last week was hospitalized with COVID pneumonia who was still under quarantine. I encouraged her, in as positive but firm tone of voice (I've known her for years) that she needed to be in quarantine for 5 more days. She told me, she just couldn't take it mentally anymore and had already gone to the store – even though she was highly infectious. Who knows how many people she might have infected by going out? If you “have” to go out we know now the importance of not only [double masking](#) but also how to put them on to [minimize discomfort](#) (important for me as I have a deformed ear from a prior accident).

School opening continues to be a flash point of debate [despite recent CDC guidance](#). Bottom line for me I agree with Georgetown’s Larry Gostin that [safe school openings need](#): Federal funding for testing, protective gear, well-ventilated spaces and other safety measures is one. The other is a “media and political campaign” to reassure the public that reopening can be safe and is necessary. Federal leadership is key.

So, we need more vaccine but yet there [needs to be a reckoning](#) about drug prices which continue to go up. But for today the U.S. is focused on increasing vaccine supplies. It takes a long time to produce the vaccine- [here’s why](#).

For the next few months AND together with others are focused on vaccine hesitancy (I spoke with a colleague today who said that 40% of the health professionals at his hospital refused the vaccine) and

[anti-vaxxers](#). We welcome your presence, especially health professionals but all are welcome, for a vaccine chat this Wed at 7:30 p.m. No registration required. In the meantime, for all pining for the vaccine, take a look at this [Jimmy Kimmel Valentine Card](#).