



Aide Medicale Caritative France-Ukraine

Association loi 1901: aide aux blessés, échange de savoir-faire médical, convois d'aide humanitaire, aide aux enfants

PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA CARE IN UKRAINE

Civilians and soldiers need psychological care, but the available skills and resources remain insufficient. The psychology community in Ukraine has issued an appeal for assistance. We are responding with two training sessions, starting this fall, given by French experts in psychotraumatology and stress specialists:

- One in the management of [post-traumatic stress disorder \(PTSD\)](#), targeting local psychologists
- A second in the [management of stress and pain](#) using mind/body techniques, targeting hospital staff and people in charge of serious injuries, including amputations and burn injuries.

Why train psychological trauma care

The war in Donbass produces daily new cases of post-traumatic stress disorder among soldiers and civilians (refugees, victims of bombings, victims of torture, soldiers' families, and caregivers). Such psychological trauma must be recognized and treated so that victims have a chance at returning to a normal life.



Ukrainian training in acute psychotraumatology was neglected since the country has enjoyed 30 years free of conflicts, terrorism or major disasters. Ukrainian psychologists lack the expertise to properly assist victims, especially at a large scale. Ukrainian psychologists and caregivers have taken the initiative to get appropriate training.

A number of trainings have taken place in Ukraine or abroad since 2013. However, the skills gap remains considerable in the face of the scale of the current crisis. Ukrainian psychologists have shown great interest in benefiting from the approach to psychotraumatology and stress management used by their colleagues in France.



The trainings we have organized are designed to give participants tools they can immediately apply in the practice with patients. The trainings also equip participants to train others, using a “train-the-trainer” approach, expanding the reach of our programs. A process is being put in place to evaluate the results of our work and adapt it as needed.

Our partners in Ukraine



We have partnered with the local NGO “Ukrainian Professional Association for the Overcoming of Traumatic Events”, which operates the “Psychological Crisis Service” (“Українська Асоціація фахівців з подолання наслідків психотравмуючих подій” operating “Психологічна Кризова Служба”). This association was created by the volunteer psychologists of the “Maidan Psychological Unit” and now has more than 300 psychologists and again that many caregivers from related fields.

The professional association has set itself the dual goals of 1) training professional and volunteers and 2) delivering care for individuals suffering psychological trauma: refugees, soldiers, their families and also hospital staff and volunteers needing psychological support <http://psyservice.org>

Trainers

Ukrainian psychologists need validating trainings that can guarantee the quality of acquired knowledge.



Psychologists from the Psychotrauma Center at the Institute of Victimology in Paris form the core of trainers for this project in Ukraine. The Institute is an internationally renowned center with clinical, scientific and academic activities. The Institute serves as coordinator for UNESCO's UNITWIN network on addressing violence. For more information see

www.institutdevictimologie.fr

These trainers are joined by colleagues from the French Institute of Psycho-Bodily Practices which is offering training in stress and pain management through hypnosis. The IFPPC has trained teams at the Invalides Hospital in Paris, which treats French veterans. For more information see www.ifppc.eu



Budget

Sending experts to Ukraine to deliver the trainings has a price, even if both teams have made significant cost reduction. Training fees alone reach 4000€ and 7500€. In addition, we have organisational costs and supervision fees.

The project can only go ahead once the budget is secured.

That is why we appeal to your generosity to help us respond to the international appeal from psychologists in Ukraine and help bring the initiative to fruition.



You can donate through the site [HelloAsso](#) , project “Aide Psychologique en Ukraine”

**- or directly through our site “AMC France-Ukraine “
- or by par check, payable to "AMC France-Ukraine".**

Address: AMC France-Ukraine, 3 Rue de la Liberté, 77500 Chelles

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in Brief

PTSD arises when a person experiences a traumatic event perceived as a threat to his or her life, which was experienced together with feelings of horror and impotence. In its acute stages there are feelings of anxiety, fear, a sensation of imminent death, restlessness or apathy and lethargy and in some cases a traumatic disassociation wherein the afflicted person feels like he or she is operating on autopilot, separated from real life.

If it progresses, the state of stress becomes a chronic condition characterized by flashbacks, avoidance and by a heightened state of alertness triggered by an ongoing feeling of being in danger. The afflicted person experiences frequent memories, which place him or her in a state of psychological distress, which can be triggered by everyday images and experiences. Those with this affliction often relieve the original trauma at night through nightmares. People therefore enter a state of permanent hyper-vigilance and seeks to avoid any triggering situations, leading to social isolation. To sleep at night and to relieve their psychological distress, they often turn to drugs or alcohol.

Diagnosis and specialized care can help traumatized people retain normal family and social relationships.

The hospitalized wounded

Wounded in hospital care often show symptoms of acute stress, which hospital caregivers can be ill equipped to address. However, there are tools to help manage these symptoms, through communication and mind/body techniques like relaxation and hypnosis.

Drug treatments are usually insufficient to address complex pain, such as phantom limb, except by putting the victim into a coma. Mind/body techniques succeed at better controlling pain. The wounded, initially accompanied by their caregivers, can learn to deploy these techniques themselves and use them self-sufficiently. Better pain and stress management positively impact both patients and caregivers.