

Gender in Times of Corona – 1 - 24 March 2020 www.genderengezondheid.nl

Dear NVG&G-members,

We hope this extra newsletter finds you well. A big shout out in particular to those of us who care for us and our loved ones in health care – thank you, and stay healthy... And to all the rest of us, we send our love and support.

With this newsletter we aim to provide knowledge, thoughts and reflections about the relationship between sex/gender and COVID-19. A gender perspective, also in the midst of the storm, will help us to leave no one behind. Structural inequality is at the heart of disease emergency and spread, of which gender is a critical element (Hartigan et al., 2002). Communicable diseases result in millions of deaths worldwide, an estimated one-third from infectious and parasitic diseases, and most occur in low income countries (LIC). The most structural obstacle to eliminate infectious disease is poverty, regardless of age, sex, or race. Viceversa, disease exacerbates poverty, and as such creates a vicious cycle. The health gap between poor and rich is largely explained by communicable diseases, and the largest infectious cause of death and disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) are respiratory infections, and they are responsible for more deaths in women and more female DALYs lost compared with men (Hartigan et al., 2002). Whether this is the case for COVID-19 as well remains to be seen and may depend on national and local contexts and factors. Early reports do show that COVID-19 has particular sex/gender characteristics (see overview) with equal infection rates between men and women but with higher death rates in men. However, many other issues are to be addressed.

In this newsletter, and to the best of our knowledge, we aim to provide sex- and gender-related knowledge, literature, and news on Covid-19 and sex/gender. But we need your help! Please send us resources, links to media outlets, literature, etc, so that we can disseminate quickly (info@genderengezondheid.nl). Our focus is not on the biological and medical aspects of the outbreak alone, but rather we aim for a broad overview and understanding of coronavirus COVID-19 and how it is related to sex and gender (see figure 1).

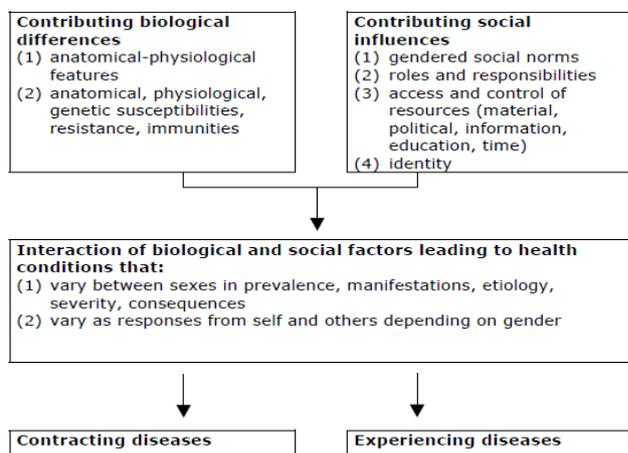


Figure 1 Hartigan, Price & Tolhurst, 2002¹

We will collect the information and disseminate it to the gender and health community and our members. Thank you so much in advance! Stay safe, and warm regards,

on behalf of the board NVG&G,
 Petra Verdonk, Aletta Oosten, Maaïke Muntinga
info@genderengezondheid.nl

¹ Hartigan, P., Price, J., Tolhurst, R. (2002). Communicable Diseases: Outstanding Commitments to Gender and Poverty. Chapter 2 in: Engendering International Health. The Challenge of Equity (Eds: G. Sen, A. George, P. Östlin). London: The MIT Press, 37-61.

After having compiled the list below, we found the Gender and COVID-19 Working Group and their resource. The Working Group consists of researchers across the globe and the United Nations. They plan for monthly calls with all those interested in gender issues and the pandemic.	
Working Group COVID-19 and Gender Joining the group email Rosemary Morgan Rosemary.Morgan@jhu.edu	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1_QfLS6Z90w_1rPM-jdeKC_IQXTcwA8Z4kF8Z5CerZrk/edit The document lists resources and news on gender and COVID-19, and is open for those who have the link

General information International			
Source	Title	Link	Content
WHO	Emergency. Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic	https://www.who.int/	News, information, links, situation reports, latest numbers, online training
WHO	Rolling updates on coronavirus-disease (COVID-19)	https://www.who.int/news-room/feature-stories/detail/who-health-alert-brings-covid-19-facts-to-billions-via-whatsapp	Offers the possibility for updates through WhatsApp
Centers for Disease Control CDC	Coronavirus (COVID 19)	https://www.coronavirus.gov/	
National Institutes of Health NIH	COVID-19 is an emerging, rapidly evolving situation	https://www.nih.gov/health-information/coronavirus	Research updates
Nacoti et al. (2020)	At the Epicenter of the Covid-19 Pandemic and Humanitarian Crises in Italy: Changing Perspectives on Preparation and Mitigation. NEJM, March 21 2020.	https://catalyst.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/CAT.20.0080	“Western health care systems have been built around the concept of patient-centered care, but an epidemic requires a change of perspective toward a concept of community-centered care.” “Coronavirus is the Ebola of the rich and requires a coordinated transnational effort. It is not particularly lethal, but it is very contagious. The more medicalized and centralized the society, the more widespread the virus.”
Ars Technica	Don't panic: The comprehensive Ars Technica guide to the corona virus	https://arstechnica.com/science/2020/03/dont-panic-the-comprehensive-ars-technica-guide-to-the-coronavirus/	Updated daily at 3 PM EDT.
New South Wales Government Australia	Latest updates on COVID-19 (Coronavirus)	https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/diseases/Pages/covid-19-latest.aspx	Age and sex breakdown of confirmed cases, plus other information

General information The Netherlands			
Source	Title	Link	Content
De Correspondent	“Corona in Context. Een gids die je helpt de pandemie te begrijpen”	https://decorrespondent.nl/11037/corona-in-context-een-gids-die-je-helpt-de-pandemie-te-begrijpen/4017550909944-d9fdf3ca	Overview of news and resources, you can send your recommendations for literature and The Correspondent will disseminate it further
Federatie Medisch Specialisten FMS	Informatie COVID-19	https://www.demedischspecialist.nl/	Dagelijkse update, nieuws, webinars
KNMG	Homepage Medisch Contact	https://www.knmg.nl/home/medisch-contact-2.htm	Nieuws
KNMG		https://www.knmg.nl/actualiteit-opinie/nieuws/nieuwsbericht-corona/coronavirus-1.htm	Verwijspagina en informatiebronnen voor dokters en patiënten
Landelijke Huisartsen Vereniging LHV	Coronavirus (22/3): alle informatie op een rij	https://www.lhv.nl/actueel/nieuws/coronavirus-223-alle-informatie-voor-huisartsen-op-een-rij	Actuele informatie voor huisartsen
Nederlandse Federatie van Universitair Medische Centra NFU	Alle informatie rondom coronavirus: COVID-19	https://www.nfu.nl/actueel/covid-19	Laatste ontwikkelingen rondom coronavirus
Nederlands Huisartsen Genootschap NHG	Dossier coronavirus	https://www.nhg.org/coronavirus	Adviezen voor de praktijk, afgestemd met Rivm
Renata Verloop	Communicatietips Corona	https://www.renataverloop.nl/communicatietips-corona	Rijksoverheid, Thuisarts.nl, Rivm, Pharos, Kinderombudsvrouw, NJI, Stichting Lezen en schrijven etc.
Rijksoverheid	Coronavirus COVID-19	https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/coronavirus-covid-19	
Rijksinstituut voor Volksgezondheid en Milieu RIVM	COVID-19 Richtlijnen en draaiboeken	https://lci.rivm.nl/richtlijnen/covid-19	For GGD-en and hospitals
RIVM	Actuele informatie over het nieuwe coronavirus (COVID-19)	https://www.rivm.nl/nieuws/actuele-informatie-over-coronavirus	General information, updates, also in English
RIVM	Informatie over coronavirus (COVID-19) voor zorgprofessionals	https://www.rivm.nl/coronavirus/covid-19/informatie-voor-professionals	In Dutch. Voor zorgmedewerkers binnen en buiten de ziekenhuizen en zorgverleners in de uitvaartbranche
ZonMw, 31 January 2020	NWO en ZonMw: open access in strijd tegen coronavirus	https://www.zonmw.nl/nl/actueel/nieuws/detail/item/nwo-en-zonmw-open-access-in-strijd-tegen-coronavirus/	Oproep van ZonMw en NWO aan uitgevers en onderzoekers om publicaties Open Access te maken

ZonMw, 18 March 2020	Gevolgen COVID-19 uitbraak voor subsidierondes ZonMw	https://www.zonmw.nl/nl/actueel/nieuws/detail/item/gevolgen-covid-19-uitbraak-voor-subsidierondes-zonmw/	Nieuwe subsidierondes niet open tot 13 april. Indieningstermijn van openstaande subsidieoproepen met deadline tussen 17-3 t/m 30-4 wordt met 2 maanden verlengd. Indieningstermijn voor voortgangs- en eindverslagen met 3 maanden verlengd. Waar nodig budget neutrale verlenging.
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Sex/gender and COVID-19 – Science and reports

Note: some papers refer to Ebola – lessons learned may be useful for the COVID-19 outbreak

Author	Title/journal	Link	Key points
Nkangu, M.N., Olatunde, O.A. Sanni Y. (2017) Lessons from EBOLA	The perspective of gender on the Ebola virus using a risk management and population health framework: a scoping review. <i>Infectious Diseases of Poverty</i> , 6: 135	https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5635524/pdf/402492017_Article_346.pdf	<i>As regards Ebola:</i> Women’s increased exposure can be attributed to time spent at home and their responsibility for caring for the sick, while men’s increased vulnerability to the virus can be attributed to their responsibility for caring for livestock and to time spent away from home, as most known sources of the index cases have been infected in the process of hunting. (...) There is currently no evidence related to biological differences in female or male increases Ebola virus transmission and vulnerability; rather, there are differences in the level of exposure between men and women. Gender is therefore an important risk factor to consider in the design of health programs.
Smith, J. (2019). Lessons from EBOLA	Overcoming the ‘tyranny of the urgent’: integrating gender into disease outbreak preparedness and response. <i>Gender & Development</i> , 23(2), 355-369.	https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13552074.2019.1615288	“The implications of neglecting gender dynamics, as well as the potential of equity-based approaches to disease outbreak responses, is illustrated through a case study of the Social Enterprise Network for Development (SEND) Sierra Leone, a non-governmental organization (NGO) based in Kailahun, during the Ebola outbreak.
World Economic Forum, 12 March 2020	The coronavirus fallout may be worse for women than men. Here’s why.	https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/03/the-coronavirus-fallout-may-be-worse-for-women-than-men-heres-why/	Women comprise the majority of health and social care workers. Mass school closures particularly affected women because of responsibility for childcare. Women already do three-times as much unpaid care work than men – and caring for relatives with the virus. Research from China suggests that while COVID-19 is infecting men and women equally, women are less likely to die than men. A study from the Chinese Center for Disease Control showed the death rate among men was 2.8%, compared with 1.7% for women.
Li, Y. et al. (2020), Feb 2020	Sex differences in clinical findings among patients with coronavirus disease 2019	https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2020.02.27.20027524v1.full.pdf	Preprint, not yet peer reviewed. Do NOT use to guide clinical practice.

	(COVID-19) and severe condition. <i>MEDRXIV</i> .		
Cai, H. (2020)	Sex difference and smoking disposition in patients with COVID-19. <i>The Lancet Respiratory Medicine</i> , March 11, 2020	https://doi.org/10.1016/S2213-2600(20)30117-X	Taken together, these data seem to indicate that there might be a sex predisposition to COVID-19, with men more prone to being affected
Wenham, C., Smith, J., Morgan, R. on behalf of the Gender and COVID-19 Working Group (2020)	COVID-19: the gendered impacts of the outbreak. <i>The Lancet</i> , March 6, 2020	https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(20)30526-2/fulltext?te=1&nl=inner%20words&emc=edit_gn_20200312	Quick overview of issues pertaining to sex/gender in COVID-19 response. “We call on governments and global health institutions to consider the sex and gender effects of the COVID-19 outbreak, both direct and indirect, and conduct an analysis of the gendered impacts of the multiple outbreaks, incorporating the voices of women on the front line of the response to COVID-19 and of those most affected by the disease within preparedness and response policies or practices going forward.”
UN, 19 March 2020	Paying attention to women’s needs and leadership will strengthen COVID-19 response	https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2020/3/news-womens-needs-and-leadership-in-covid-19-response	Worldwide, 70% of health care workers are female, women are more often informal carers, lack of health insurance, insecure incomes, access to pre-/postnatal health care at risk, access to menstrual hygiene for health care workers, increase in violence, food insecurity,
UN, 19 March 2020 <i>Gender in Humanitarian Action</i>	The COVID-19 outbreak and gender	https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/news%20and%20events/stories/2020/giha%20wg%20advocacy%20brief%20gender%20impact%20covid19.pdf?la=en&vs=5651	Exacerbated burden of care on women, unaddressed needs of women health care workers, increase in gender-based violence, impact on women’s economic independence, impact on women migrant workers, interrupted access to sexual and reproductive health care, exclusion from leadership roles, need for targeted/intersectional approaches (disability, age)
CDC, 17 March 2020	Information about Coronavirus Disease 2019 – Pregnancy and breastfeeding	https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/pregnancy-breastfeeding.html	There is no knowledge on the risk of COVID-19 for pregnant mothers, pregnancy outcomes, whether it can be passed on during delivery, whether it transmits via breast milk.
Women in Global Health	OPERATION 50/50: Women’s Perspectives Save Lives	https://www.womeningh.org/operation-50-50	In partnership with Women of Color Advancing Peace and Security , Women in Global Health is compiling a list of expert women who are working to strengthen global, regional, national, and local capacities to prevent, detect, and respond to outbreaks.
Sexual and Reproductive Health Matters	COVID-19: What implications for sexual and reproductive health and rights globally?	https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_f-RHvxnsQAKu_ZyEj1X2lw	Webinar Mar 27, 2020 03:00 PM

News on sex/gender and corona			
Source	Title	Link	Take home
The Hill, n.d.	Coronavirus appears to be more fatal in men than in women	https://thehill.com/changing-america/well-being/prevention-cures/488507-coronavirus-appears-to-be-more-fatal-in-men-than	70% of coronavirusdeaths in Italy in men In China, 64% of deaths in men In South Korea 54% of deaths in men Links to CDC, reports, Chinese CDC
New York Times, 3 March 2020	What pregnant mothers should know about coronavirus	https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/03/health/coronavirus-pregnant-women-babies.html	
Forbes, 6 March 2020	Do men and women have a corona virus risk gap	https://www.forbes.com/sites/carmenniethammer/2020/03/06/do-women-and-men-have-a-coronavirus-risk-gap/#674d70446826	The need for sex and gender segregated data on infection and mortality rate
BBC, 8 March 2020	Are women and children less affected?	https://www.bbc.com/news/health-51774777	Possibly, differences in smoking rates are responsible (lifestyle), as well as differences in the immune system
BBC, 8 March 2020	Coronavirus: Five ways virus upheaval is hitting women in Asia	https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-51705199	School closures, partner violence, frontline care workers, migrant domestic helpers, longer term economic impact
New York Times, 12 March 2020	Why Women May Face a Greater Risk of Catching Coronavirus	https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/12/us/women-coronavirus-greater-risk.html	Women as formal and informal health care workers
France24, 13 March 2020	Gender and the coronavirus. How is the epidemic impacting women?	https://www.france24.com/en/20200313-51percent-gender-and-the-coronavirus-why-are-more-men-dying-than-women	Video. Interview with immunologist prof.dr. Sabra Klein, Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health
MsMagazine, 13 March 2020	The Coronavirus Gender Gap	https://msmagazine.com/2020/03/13/coronavirus-covid19-gender-gap-women-workers-nurses-teachers-flight-airline-attendants/	Women as carers, but also women's risk for job loss: flight attendants, domestic workers, teachers, nurses
Beckers Hospital Review, 13 March 2020	Gender roles and the coronavirus: Why women may have higher risk of catching COVID-19	https://www.beckershospitalreview.com/population-health/gender-roles-and-the-coronavirus-why	Women's roles in society pose higher risks. Compared to physicians, nurses have higher levels of exposure to diseases

		women-may-have-higher-risk-of-catching-covid-19.html	
SciDevNet, 16 March 2020	'Gender blind' coronavirus policies could hinder disease fight	https://www.scidev.net/global/gender/news/gender-blind-coronavirus-policies-could-hinder-disease-fight.html	Women at higher risk of infection, but have less power in decision-making Action plans that don't take into account gender differences will be less effective Economic and health impacts as schools close and travel bans set in
IPS Newsnet, 17 March 2020	Gender "could be Coronavirus key"	https://www.ipsnews.net/2020/03/gender-coronavirus-key/	Globally, women make up about 70 per cent of the health workforce and are primarily responsible for childcare, particularly in countries where schools have closed. Not recognising that this creates different needs means you're then not creating policy to mitigate against it
TIME, 18 March 2020	As cities around the world go on lock down, victims of domestic violence look for a way out	https://time.com/5803887/coronavirus-domestic-violence-victims/	COVID-19 is used by abusers to further isolate victims or threaten them. Women are the most likely victims. People who are already in an abusive situation run the risk of facing more extreme violence
NOS, 19 March 2020	Ziekenhuisbevallingen en verloskundige zorg onder druk door corona	https://nos.nl/artikel/2327675-ziekenhuisbevallingen-en-verloskundige-zorg-onder-druk-door-corona.html	Hospital deliveries and obstetrical care under pressure in the Netherlands. Women may be required to have home births. The Dutch health care system is organized for homebirths but women now may not have a choice
The Atlantic, 19 March 2020	The coronavirus is a disaster for feminism. Pandemics affect men and women differently	https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2020/03/feminism-womens-rights-coronavirus-covid19/608302/	"The coronavirus crisis will be global and long-lasting, economic as well as medical. However, it offers an opportunity. This could be the first outbreak where gender and sex differences are recorded, and taken into account by researchers and policy makers. For too long, politicians have assumed that child care and elderly care can be "soaked up" by private citizens—mostly women—effectively providing a huge subsidy to the paid economy. This pandemic should remind us of the true scale of that distortion."
Daily Mail, 20 March 2020	More than 70% of coronavirus deaths in Italy are men and scientists admit they are 'mystified' by the disparity between genders	https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8135211/More-70-coronavirus-deaths-Italy-men.html	Sex differences in infection and mortality rates in Italy – possibly explained by smoking, alcohol use, underlying illnesses, sex differences in immune system
Kaiser, 20 March 2020	Coronavirus: A Look at Gender Differences in Awareness and Actions	https://www.kff.org/womens-health-policy/issue-brief/coronavirus-a-look-at-gender-differences-in-awareness-and-actions/	More Women than Men Worry about Getting Sick and Losing Income Women more Likely than Men to Report Mental Health Effects from Worrying about Coronavirus Women Have Been More Proactive in Response to the COVID-19 Outbreak

The Guardian, 21 March 2020	For some people, social distancing means being trapped indoors with an abuser	https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/mar/21/coronavirus-domestic-violence-week-in-patriarchy?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other	Coronavirus will lead to an increase in domestic violence. Gender-based violence tends to increase during humanitarian emergencies and conflicts. Coronavirus caused a spike in China, in the US calls to hotlines are increasing, with COVID-19 being used to further control and isolate women.
Haaretz, 23 March 2020	Why Coronavirus Kills More Men Than Women	https://www.haaretz.com/world-news/premium-biology-or-behavior-scientists-study-why-coronavirus-kills-more-men-than-women-1.8688767	Focusing on immunology and sex differences in immune system
NOS, 23 March 2020	Zeker helpt coronadoden had onderliggende aandoening, twee derde is man	https://nos.nl/artikel/2328082-zeker-helpt-coronadoden-had-onderliggende-aandoening-twee-derde-is-man.html	There are no sex differences in infection rates in The Netherlands, but there is a sex difference in mortality 2:1 (M:F). This is explained by smoking behaviors, men smoke more often. Another explanation is underlying pathology such as heart disease.
CBS News, 23 March 2020	Texas becomes latest state to halt abortion services amid coronavirus outbreak	https://www.cbsnews.com/news/texas-governor-greg-abbott-stop-abortion-services-coronavirus-outbreak/	Abortion is deemed “medically unnecessary surgery” and has to be stopped, unless it is considered “medically necessary”