

INTRODUCTION

The 17 Sustainable development goals were adopted by all members of the United Nations. These goals have an aim to end poverty and racism, improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth (United Nations, 2018).

Sustainable Development goal 3 is good health and well being (United Nations, 2020).

“Ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being at all ages is essential to sustainable development. Currently, the world is facing a global health crisis unlike any other” (United Nations, 2020).

Goal 3, target 5, discusses the need to strengthen the prevention and treatment of numerous substance use disorders (United Nations, 2020).

SIGNIFICANCE

- Half a million deaths worldwide attributed to drug use (World Health Organization, 2021)
- Over 70% of those deaths are related to opioids (World Health Organization, 2021)
- Less than 10% of people who need substance abuse treatment are receiving it (World Health Organization, 2021)
- In 2019, 275 million people worldwide reported using drugs with roughly 62 million using opioids (World Health Organization, 2021)

POSITION STATEMENT

Substance abuse disorders have ravished the world for many years. Opioid agonist clinics and community health nurses providing education have been an effective strategy in combating these issues.

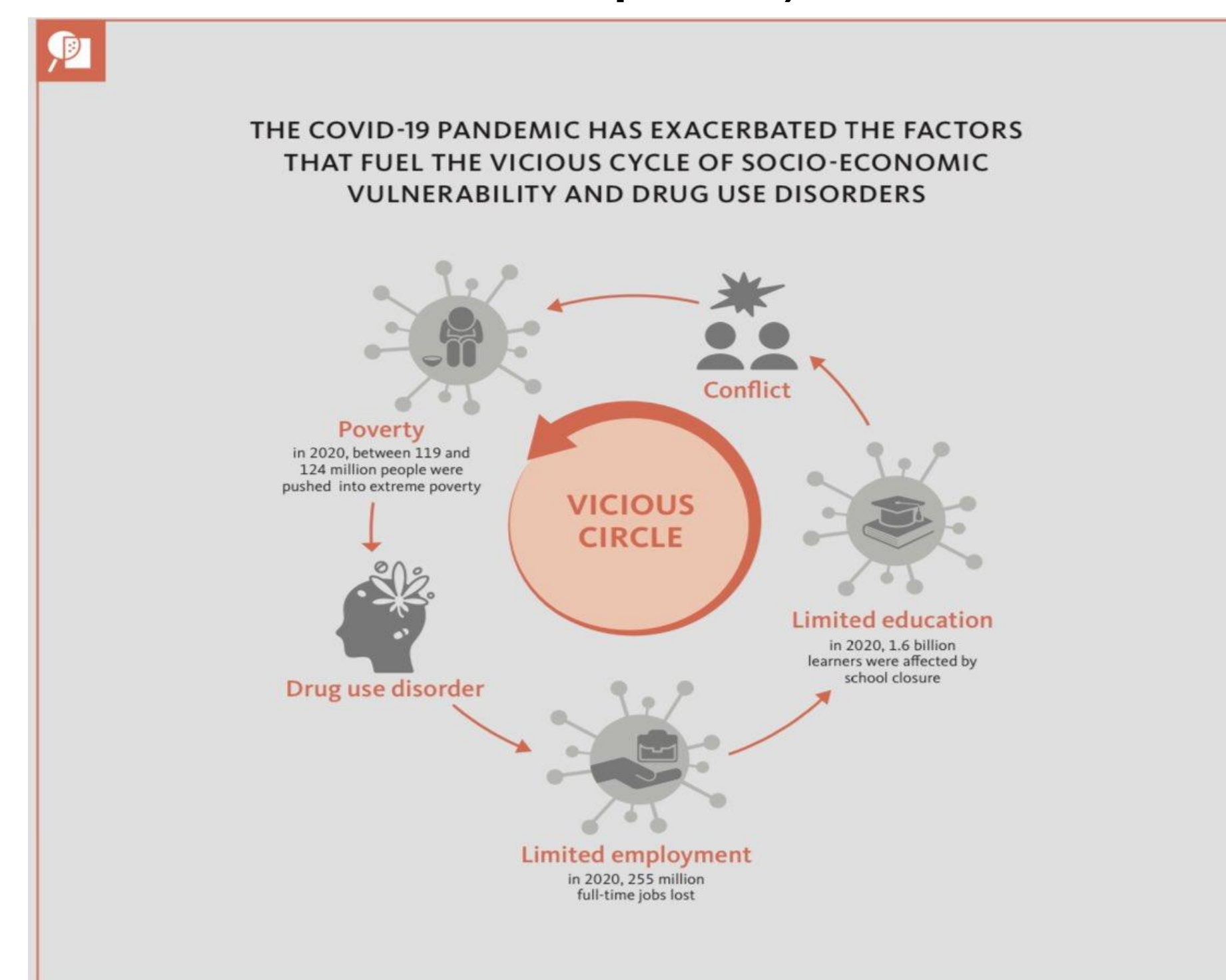
SUPPORT FOR POSITION

There was over a 120% increase in opioid overdose from 2010 to 2018 in the United States (World Health Organization, 2021).

Substance abuse accounts for roughly 11% of the world’s total health burden (Degenhardt et al., 2017, p. 299).

Covid-19 has exacerbated the effects of substance use disorders by:

- Less access to substance abuse services (United Nations, 2021a, p. 62)
- Increase in overdose mortality by 38% from fiscal year 2019 to 2020 (United Nations, 2021a, p. 63)
- Increase in riskier behaviors such as injecting drugs alone (United Nations, 2021a, p. 62)



(United Nations, 2021b, p. 89)

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends screening of substance abuse disorders at all health care settings (World Health Organization, 2018, p. 36).

- Nurses are the ones who normally screen patients at wellness visits, therefore they need to be aware of the signs of abuse

The WHO recommends nurses should attend and be involved in substance abuse programs (World Health Organization, 2020, p. 51).

- For people in recovery, nurses provide support and education at methadone and other opioid agonist treatment clinic
- Nurses provide supervision when administering methadone or other opioid agonist medications

Community health nurses can provide education to at risk populations about different substances and can teach how to support someone with a substance abuse disorder.



(Movendi International, 2021)

CONCLUSION

Substance abuse has been a problem in the world for a very long time. The United Nations has set out Sustainable development goals that they hope to achieve by 2030. Nurses play a vital role in helping slow the progression of substance abuse disorders. Nurses can screen at wellness visits, supervise when giving opioid agonist treatments, and can provide education to many different populations. Without the help of nurses and support for individuals that suffer from substance abuse, this issue will only keep getting worse.

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