

CONFERENCE ABSTRACT

On mindfulness for healthcare professionals, in research for effects on their wellbeing and wellbeing of patients under their care: an Integrated Personalized Approach.

ICIC20 Virtual Conference – September 2020

Roderick van Hilten¹.

1: Hogeschool Utrecht, Utrecht, Utrecht Netherlands

Introduction

In healthcare mindfulness is used as a proved method in the traditional psychological intervention for depression, pain, anxiety and addictions and is defined as moment to moment non-judgmental awareness. In the current time of a heavy workload and high work pressure the use of mindfulness can be relevant as a method for stress prevention. Therefore, we aimed study the effects of mindfulness on the coping skills for healthcare professionals themselves.

Theory/Methods

Next to literature research, we studied the relevance of a mindfulness training among 50 healthcare professionals who combine their daily work with a part-time Master Integrated Care Design in The Netherlands). These students experience an extra workload of twenty hours per week. The self-perceived effects of a six-week mindfulness training during their part time education was measured and the students delivered a paper based on their own general experience with mindfulness and experienced new insights.

Results

From the literature study we found studies suggesting that increased self-awareness can help prevent and manage stress and increase empathy: hence improving effective patient care of both pre- and current medical students and that mindfulness training of physicians can reduce medical errors. Other studies show that teaching mindfulness to health professionals improves the quality of care they deliver through enhancing caregiver self-efficacy or implying that mindfulness to psychologists in-training positively improves the mental wellbeing of their patients under their care.

Analysis of the current research among the master students is now ongoing. However preliminary data show that increased mindfulness and self-awareness supports new insights on personal coping skills.

Discussions

Mindfulness training as part of the Master Integrated Care Design curriculum could be an important complement to the existing curriculum of health care educational programs while at the same time it is noted that a relatively large number of students who are not interested in mindfulness at the start.

Conclusions

The analysis shows that practicing mindfulness increases the sense of self awareness among the participated students improving both the professional and private wellbeing of the healthcare professionals. The literature research shows that mindfulness in turn could improve the mental health of the patients under their care.

Lessons learned

To make the mindfulness training a voluntary part of the health care curriculum for the bachelors- as well as masters-degree in healthcare.

Limitations

A more in-depth desk research could also show some disadvantages of a mindfulness training to students in healthcare while comparing effects of other approaches in a more diverse population.

Suggestions for future research

Future research should not only include the self-perceived effects of a mindfulness training at the end of a training, but should also focus on the level of actual mindfulness experience during the direct moment while still being consciously aware of the mindfulness exercise. The biggest difference between these studies is the handling of time, noting the direct experience of both healthcare professional and its client with respect to their own and their patient's wellbeing, during and right after a mindfulness exercise.