
CONFERENCE ABSTRACT

Mindfulness to Combat Healthcare Worker Burnout During Covid-19; an Integrated Care Model

1st North American Conference on Integrated Care, Toronto, 4 - 7 October 2021

Fariha Chowdhury¹, Nicole Adams, Soyeon Kim, Sarah Hunter

1: Waypoint Centre for Mental Health Care, Canada

Introduction

Healthcare workers experience burnout, mindfulness programs have shown to decrease burnout in healthcare workers (1). Early into the COVID-19 pandemic, Waypoint Centre for Mental Health Care (Waypoint) provided a virtual 4-week skills-based Mindfulness Ambassador Program (MAP) to healthcare workers to buffer burnout and contribute to improving patient-care with Waypoint's integrated care system. The current study evaluated MAP's efficacy in mitigating burnout, and strategies to support overall wellbeing.

1. Dreison KC, Luther L, Bonfils KA, Sliter MT, McGrew JH, Salyers MP. Job burnout in mental health providers: A meta-analysis of 35 years of intervention research. *Journal of occupational health psychology*. 2018;23(1):18.

Aims Objectives Theory or Methods

This study used a mixed methodological approach. Healthcare workers (n= 131; age 31-50 = 53.8%; female = 93%) completed the demographic and Maslach Burnout Inventory questionnaires. A linear regression model was estimated using the generalized least squares via maximum likelihood approach to determine the efficacy of MAP and the factors associated with burnout. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to integrate stakeholders', healthcare workers' and facilitators' perspectives to gain valuable insight towards providing an optimal wellness program in hospitals. The interview questions were co-created with Mindfulness Without Borders and Waypoint Centre. Thirteen participants and facilitators participated, and thematic analysis was used.

Highlights or Results or Key Findings

Quantitative analysis revealed that the 4-week online MAP significantly reduced emotional exhaustion and cynicism in healthcare workers during the pandemic. Increasing the number of mindfulness practices between the sessions significantly increased the chances of reducing burnout.

The semi-structured interviews demonstrated ways the pandemic has taken an immense toll such as work-home separation, emotional exhaustion and isolation combined with the challenge of finding time for self-care. Participants shared how the MAP designed for healthcare workers contributed to their improved personal and professional wellbeing. They shared the ways in which they integrated mindfulness practices into their daily lives. Facilitators experienced increased employee engagement where they felt a sense of connection and compassion within their healthcare team. The data emphasized the importance of supporting continued mindfulness practices and opportunities to bridge into a lengthier, more robust mindfulness program. Providing resources and support for continued practices should be considered.

Conclusions

The 4-week skill-based MAP significantly reduced burnout in healthcare workers and improved wellbeing. MAP success was attributed to the number of daily mindfulness practices and being able to integrate practices into personal and professional life. Integrating participant experiences and stakeholder opinions provided insight into how to enhance the mindfulness program.

Implications for applicability/transferability sustainability and limitations

Healthcare systems should consider mindfulness programs to boost the wellbeing of healthcare workers and support patient-care. They should also apply integrated care models when designing, implementing and evaluating mindfulness programs. Longer-term maintenance effects should be explored and condensed mindfulness programs should be compared to non-abbreviated mindfulness programs.