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Examining Nurse Resiliency & a Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Intervention to Prevent Nurse Burnout

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Background

- Nurses working in high-stress environments, such as ICU, pediatrics, and oncology, are at a significantly increased risk of burnout syndrome, compassion fatigue, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Czaja, Moss & Mealer, 2012). Each of these can impair judgment and decision-making and can result in emotional exhaustion, decreased job satisfaction, disengagement, anxiety, depression, irritability, substance abuse, sleep difficulties, gastrointestinal disorders, and impaired immune response (Mealer, Jones & Moss, 2012).
- Resilience is a topic that has gained much discussion in recent years surrounding the significant burdens nurses are experiencing. Nurses with resilience exhibit a heightened awareness, internal stability, and flexibility that allow them to navigate high-stress situations.
- The purpose of this quality improvement project was to implement a MBSR training course for nursing staff to improve nurse resiliency.

Methods

- Managing Stress Through Mindfulness: An Introduction Class was offered to staff nurses working on a 23-bed medical surgical telemetry unit in a free-standing Midwestern Children's Hospital.
- The course was taught by two Social Workers trained in Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR).
- The project participants were full time and part time bachelors prepared nurses.
- Nurses were able to self-select to participate in the project intervention after receiving electronic communication via email and flyers around the unit requesting participants.
- The participants in the course completed pre and post-intervention surveys. The surveys completed were the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC), and the Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQOL).

Results

- A total of 7 nurses participated in the course.
- All participants had >3 years of pediatric nursing experience.
- The difference from pre to post intervention for the Connor Davidson Resilience scale was significant at 0.011 (P<0.05).
- CD-RISC is scored on a 0-100 scale with higher scores supportive of higher resilience.
- All participants felt the class was extremely beneficial.

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre	69.8571	7	9.08164	3.43254
	Post	86.0000	7	9.88264	3.73529

Paired Samples Test Differences (Pair 1 Pre-Post)

		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
Mean	Std. Deviation	Lower	Upper
-16.14286	11.82411	-27.07833	7-520738

Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
4.46909	-3.612	6.0	0.011

Participant Demographics:

Females: n=6   Males: n=1
Caucasian/White: n=5   Hispanic/Latino: n=2

Educational Components of the Course:

- Arriving Meditation
- Body Scan
- Stress and our Bodies Discussion
- STOP and Automatic Thoughts Discussion
- Awareness of Breath
- 3 Minute Breathing
- Walking Meditation
- Mindful Movement
- Loving Kindness

Conclusion

- The results of this Quality Improvement project support the idea that Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction interventions can improve nurse resiliency.
- The results of this study support results of other studies indicating beneficial effects of mindfulness interventions for nurses and providers.
- The nature of the course, and short time between pre- and post-intervention surveys (2 weeks), did not allow for adequate completion of the ProQOL surveys.
- The nursing profession is emotionally taxing and can lead to high levels of stress and burnout for those working in the profession. Resilience in nurses is a necessary trait to have in order to manage the stress and burnout associated with the emotional demands of the profession.
- It is especially important to utilize these mindfulness based interventions in nurses working in high stress environments, including pediatric and critical care settings.

Limitations & Future Work

LIMITATIONS
- Small sample size was the major limitation of this project.
- Participants did not receive pay or continuing education credit for participating in the all day training.
- The class was only offered on one day. Scheduling conflicts were evident due to the class only being offered to staff nurses on this one unit. Only a limited number of individuals could be off on one given day in order to staff the unit appropriately to care for patients.

FUTURE WORK
- Future work would aim to make the course more widely available to staff nurses throughout the hospital.
- Requiring a class, such as this one, for staff nurses yearly or bi-yearly to ensure nurses are adequately equipped to care for themselves as well as their patients.