RUTGERS
School of Nursing

Anti-Stigma Campaign to Increase Help-Seeking for DNP Students with Psychological Distress

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Introduction

Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) students are at increased risk of developing psychological distress (PD), but are unlikely to seek professional psychological help due to barriers such as stigma.

Anti-stigma campaigns have the potential to:
- ❖ Improve attitudes and behaviors about PD
- ❖ Reduce PD-related stigma
- ❖ Increase comfort with psychological help-seeking

Purpose & PICOT Question

Purpose: Examine the effects of an anti-stigma campaign to increase help-seeking for PD among DNP students.
PICOT question: "In DNP students (P), how does an on-campus anti-stigma campaign (I) about PD compared to not using an anti-stigma campaign (C) increase psychological help-seeking (O) in 2 months (T)?"

Aim & Objectives

Aim: To increase psychological help-seeking for PD among DNP students.
Objectives:
- ❖ To gather demographic and baseline information about PD stigma and help-seeking from DNP students
- ❖ To develop a multi-media anti-stigma campaign
- ❖ To implement the anti-stigma campaign for two months
- ❖ To evaluate the effects on stigma, help-seeking, and psychological service uptake for PD following the campaign

Background & Significance

Risk of PD
- ❖ Graduate students are 6 times more likely to develop PD
- ❖ Student nurses also at increased risk for PD
- ❖ Professional psychological care is an effective treatment option for PD, but university mental health services were utilized by only 0.1% in NJ in 2010

Impacts of problem
- ❖ Academic struggles
- ❖ Health problems
- ❖ Poor clinical performance and patient outcomes
- ❖ High PD-related costs including absenteeism, malpractice, and professional losses

Barriers to psychological help-seeking
- ❖ Social and workplaces stigmas
- ❖ Fear of disclosure, discrimination, or being seen as different or weak

Methodology

Design: One group pre- and post-surveys to assess participants' perception of psychological help-seeking and stigma.
Settings: School of Nursing in US Northeast
Project Population: DNP students
    Sample size: 55 pre- and 57 post-survey participants
Recruitment: By e-mail and in-person
Consent: Reviewed with participants
Study Interventions: IRB-approved anti-stigma campaign using daily online posts on Instagram, and flyers posted in nursing buildings (Figures 1 and 2).
Outcomes to be Measured
- ❖ Campus mental health service uptake
- ❖ Attitudes Toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help Scale-Short Form (ATSPPHS-SF)
- ❖ Social Stigma of Receiving Psychological Help Scale (SSRPHS)
- ❖ Instagram analytics

Table 1. ATSPPHS-SF Results
Mann-Whitney test results: Z= -9.12, p<.05

Descriptive Statistics	Pre-survey	Post-survey
Mean	19.454545	19.929825
Standard Error	0.7398326	0.7694266
Median	21	21
Mode	21	12
Standard Deviation	5.4867456	5.8090436
Range	22	25
Minimum	6	5
Maximum	28	30
Sum	1070	1136
Count	55	57

Table 2. SSRPHS Results
Mann-Whitney test results: Z= -9.12, p<0.5

Descriptive Statistics	Pre-survey	Post-survey
Mean	9.2727273	9.6315789
Standard Error	0.4345783	0.3915073
Median	9	9
Mode	10	8
Standard Deviation	3.2229188	2.955815
Range	12	12
Minimum	4	5
Maximum	16	17
Sum	510	549
Count	55	57

Figure 1. Anti-stigma campaign Instagram account.

Figure 2. Anti-stigma campaign flyer.
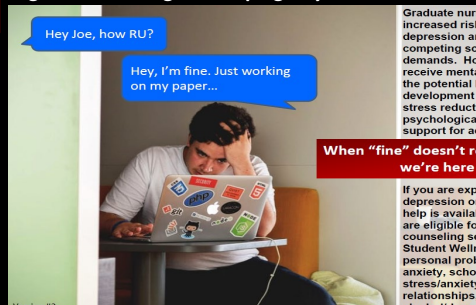
Results

Mental health service uptake:
- ❖ 1 new case per month
- ❖ 45 minutes more spent per month

ATTSPPHS-SF: Participants had increased positive attitudes toward professional help-seeking (Table 1).

SSRPHS: Increased perception of stigma towards receiving treatment (Table 2).

Instagram analytics:
- ❖ 653 Likes
- ❖ 13 Comments
- ❖ 2498 Reach
- ❖ 8791 Impressions
- ❖ 24 Profile Visits
- ❖ 3 Follows
- ❖ 56 Saves
- ❖ 42 Shares

Discussion

Help-seeking for PD
- ❖ The number of new cases only increased by 1 per month.
- ❖ The amount of time spent providing psychological services increased by 45 minutes per month.

Attitudes towards Help-seeking
- ❖ Slight increase in positive attitudes towards help-seeking.

Perception of Stigma
- ❖ Slight increase in perception of stigma associated with mental health care.

Awareness of Psychological Services
- ❖ 27% Increase in awareness of on-campus psychological services.

Implications

Clinical Practice: Improve clinical performance, increase productivity, and prevent medical error.
Healthcare Policy: Support students, provide appropriate resources, and enhance relationship between schools of nursing and mental health service centers.
Quality and Safety: Healthier nursing workforce, lower rates of absenteeism and attrition, fewer errors, and improve patient outcomes and satisfaction.
Education: Reinforce knowledge about PD.
Economic: Higher productivity, job and workforce retention, lower healthcare expenses, and fewer malpractice costs.

Conclusions

- ❖ DNP students are at increased risk of PD, but unlikely to seek help.
- ❖ Literature supports the use of anti-stigma campaigns to reduce stigma, spread awareness about PD and help-seeking, and prevent PD-related complications.
- ❖ Despite the increased perception of stigma, there was also an improvement in positive attitudes towards help-seeking and awareness of on-campus psychological services.
- ❖ Anti-stigma campaigns are a potentially effective tool to improve attitudes and promote psychological help-seeking for PD.

References

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