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Format: Abstract

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A mindfulness course decreases burnout and improves well-being among healthcare providers.

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Author information

Abstract

OBJECTIVE: Healthcare providers are under increasing stress and work-related burnout has become common. Mindfulness-based interventions have a potential role in decreasing stress and burnout. The purpose of this study was to determine if a continuing education course based on mindfulness-based stress reduction could decrease burnout and improve mental well-being among healthcare providers, from different professions.

DESIGN: This was a pre-post observational study conducted in a university medical center. A total of 93 healthcare providers, including physicians from multiple specialties, nurses, psychologists, and social workers who practiced in both university and community settings, participated. The intervention was a continuing education course based on mindfulness-based stress reduction that met 2.5 hours a week for 8 weeks plus a 7-hour retreat. The classes included training in four types of formal mindfulness practices, including the body scan, mindful movement, walking meditation and sitting meditation, as well as discussion focusing on the application of mindfulness at work. The course was offered 11 times over 6 years. The main outcome measures were work-related burnout as measured by the Maslach Burnout Inventory and self-perceived mental and physical well-being as measured by the SF-12v2.

RESULTS: Maslach Burnout Inventory scores improved significantly from before to after the course for both physicians and other healthcare providers for the Emotional Exhaustion ($p < 0.03$), Depersonalization ($p < 0.04$), and Personal Accomplishment ($p < 0.001$) scales. Mental well-being measured by the SF12v2 also improved significantly ($p < 0.001$). There were no significant changes in the SF12v2 physical health scores.

CONCLUSION: A continuing education course based on mindfulness-based stress reduction

was associated with significant improvements in burnout scores and mental well-being for a broad range of healthcare providers.

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