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Awareness Matters: Improving Healthcare Workers’ Self-Efficacy, Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes Related to Mental Illness and Suicide Prevention

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Abstract

Problem Description: Healthcare workers’ (HCWs) lack of knowledge impacts the care received by patients with mental illness and suicidal ideations.

Rationale: Increasing knowledge has been linked to patients seeking care and achieving optimal health outcomes.

Intervention: Participants attended training and received interactive emails over a six-week period.

Results: 73 HCWs attended training and responded to eight of the twelve emails. A paired t-test demonstrated a statistically significant change in both survey instruments when participants attended training and answered 5 or more emails (p=0.01 & p=0.02).

Conclusion: Raising awareness through training and emails impacted HCWs' knowledge which led to better identification of patients in need.
**Rationale**

- Idaho had the 5th highest suicide rate in the US in 2017; for every completed suicide, there are approximately 25 attempted suicides.
- Healthcare workers’ (HCW) lack knowledge about suicide prevention.
- HCWs’ negative stigmas and attitudes prevent patients from seeking and obtaining care for their mental illness.

**Purpose/Aims**

- Improve HCWs’ knowledge, attitudes, and self-efficacy related to mental illness and suicide prevention.
- Increase HCWs’ community awareness & involvement in activities related to mental health.

**Methods**

- **Question, Persuade, & Refer (QPR) gatekeeper training**
- **Spaced Learning Model**
  - Bi-weekly emails for 6 weeks
- **Survey Instruments**
  - Mental Illness Clinical Attitude (MICA-4) survey
  - Mental Health Knowledge Schedule (MAKS)

**Results**

73 (100%) participants self-reported improved knowledge and skills related to using QPR for someone who was suicidal.

**Clinical Relevance**

- HCWs have an important role in suicide prevention.
- Raising HCWs’ awareness of mental illness and suicide prevention through QPR and bi-weekly emails improved knowledge, attitudes, and decreased stigmas which may lead to improving patient care.

**References available upon request carlana13@ gmail.com**

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