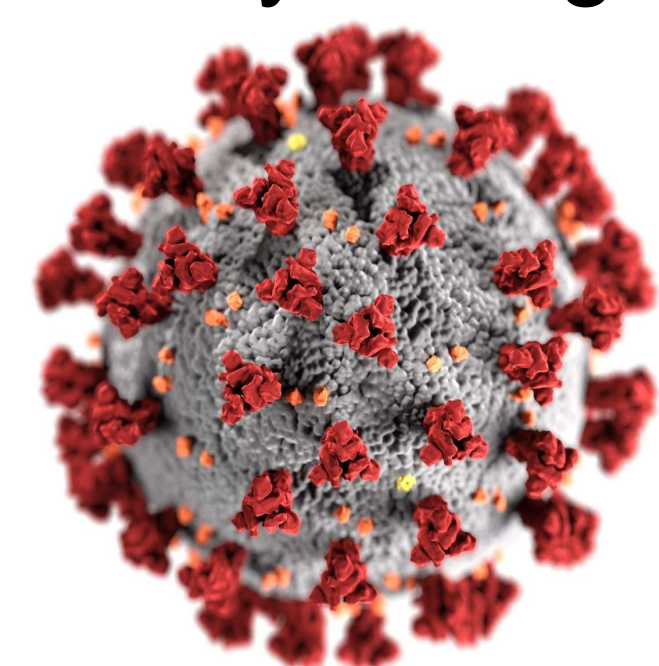


Non-Pharmacological Therapy Treatment vs. No Intervention Effects on Levels of Anxiety of Health Care Workers (HCWs) During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Introduction

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, healthcare workers (HCW) have experienced immense levels of increased stress leading to depression and anxiety.

In healthcare workers with anxiety, how does non-pharmacological therapy and treatment compared to no intervention affect levels of anxiety during the COVID-19 pandemic?



Design/Sample

Our study focused on analyzing qualitative studies, systematic reviews, and meta-analyses regarding the impact of interventions on the anxiety of HCWs during the pandemic. Studies ranged from small-scale studies with focus groups of only 7 participants to analyses of data concerning tens of thousands of HCWs. Studies had to outline specific interventions and report results after the implementation of interventions to be included.

Analysis

There is a high prevalence of anxiety surrounding HCWs during the pandemic, specifically in relation to the fear of becoming infected and infecting others. Many symptoms of anxiety accompanied pandemic burnout.

Many of the studied interventions did alleviate some symptoms of anxiety, especially ones involving social support. Emotional and physical support between HCWs and stress-relieving activities were strong interventions.

Multiple studies mentioned participants requesting additional PPE over psychological interventions, suggesting that physical safety plays an important role in mental health.

Results

Title of Article	Findings
CBT Informed Interventions for Essential Workers During the COVID-19 Pandemic (Benhamou, 2020)	This qualitative study found that HCWs felt unsupported at work, and sought mental health support during the pandemic due to lack of PPE, increased work demands, fear of contracting or spreading the virus. It is recommended that clinicians help essential workers meet their basic needs by modifying health and sleep.
Impact of coronavirus syndromes on physical and mental health of healthcare workers: Systematic review (Salazar, 2020)	This meta-analysis study focused on HCW, sex, age, professional category, physician's vs nurses. This study found that exposure to high viral loads from contaminated patients brought high stress. Evidence suggests monitoring for emerging mental health disorders should become high priority and preventative care.
An Institutional Model for Health Care Workers' Mental Health During Covid-19 (Shapiro, 2021)	This qualitative study used CREATE: a proactive team-based support intervention designed to provide psychological care to frontline workers with a focus on alleviating stress and strengthening social support. HCWs experienced increased positive emotional affect throughout the program.
Interventions to address mental health issues in healthcare workers during infectious disease outbreaks: A systematic review (Zace, 2021)	This systematic review and meta-analysis findings concluded that psychological interventions such as CBT and de-stress exercises could promote an increase in resilience, decrease in stress, and increased wellbeing for HCWs and should be implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic.
Stress, anxiety, depression and burnout in frontline healthcare workers during two peaks of COVID-19 pandemic in Russia (Mosolova, 2021)	Conducted two independent cross-sectional studies that found that HCWs struggling need to be identified early on and supported with additional social/psychological services like self-help interventions, online materials on stress/anxiety reduction, access to support groups, sufficient PPE and training on how to use it, etc. at work to manage their mental health burdens, as anxiety levels rose during the second peak of the pandemic.



Conclusions/Further Study

In conclusion, there is not yet sufficient evidence to definitively support the PICO(T) question in determining how non-pharmacologic therapy treatment (versus no intervention) works to decrease the levels of anxiety in frontline healthcare workers during this unprecedented global pandemic.

It is imperative that health care providers take their emotional and mental health into consideration in order to aid in the longevity of their careers and ultimately the wellbeing of their patients.

Acknowledgements

- Benhamou, et al.. (2020). CBT-Informed Interventions for Essential Workers During the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy*, 50(4), 275–283. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10879-020-09467-3>
- Doctors call for systemic change to tackle burnout among health-care workers. (2021). <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/thecurrent/the-current-for-feb-2-2021-1.5897412/doctors-call-for-systemic-change-to-tackle-burnout-among-health-care-workers-1.5897645>
- Mosolova, et al. (2021). *Stress, anxiety, depression and burnout in frontline healthcare workers during two peaks of covid-19 pandemic in Russia*. *Psychiatry Research*. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0165178121005229>.
- Salazar de Pablo, et al. (2021). *Impact of coronavirus syndromes on physical and mental health of health care workers: Systematic review and meta-analysis*.
- Shapiro, et al. (2021). *An institutional model for Health Care Workers' mental health during covid-19*. *NEJM Catalyst Innovations in Care Delivery*.
- The Impact of COVID-19: 5 Ways Workforce Planning Will Never be the Same. <https://web.mhanet.com/media-library/the-impact-of-covid-19-5-ways-workforce-planning-will-never-be-the-same/> <https://catalyst.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/CAT.20.0684>.
- Zace, et. al (2021). *Interventions to address mental health issues in healthcare workers during infectious disease outbreaks: A systematic review*. *Journal of Psychiatric Research*. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0022395621000868>.