

6th Biennial Building Healthy Academic Communities National Summit: Abstracts from the Poster Winners

This Spring, the National Consortium for Building Health Academic Communities, in collaboration with the University of North Carolina Wilmington, hosted the sixth Biennial National Summit – *Riding the Waves of Wellbeing*. Attendees participated in a variety of workshops, breakout sessions, and wellness activities. Keynote speakers included Chris and Nik Nikic, authors of *1% Better: Reaching My Full Potential and How You Can Too*. Plenary presentations were provided by Abdul El-Sayed, MD, Harry A. and Margaret D. Towsley Foundation Policymaker in Residence, University of Michigan; Sheri Shaw, Assistant Dean for Student Success, University of North Carolina Wilmington; David Feldman, PhD, McCarthy Professor, Department of Psychology, Santa Clara University; and Bernadette Melnyk, PhD, APRN-CNP, FAANP, FNAP, FAAN, The Ohio State University. In addition to these outstanding activities and presentations, the Biennial National Summit also included a judged poster session. BHAC is pleased to present the abstracts from the winning posters.



Improving the Work Environment by Prioritizing Wellness on a General Internal Medicine and Clinical Targeted Therapies Unit

Evan Thoman, MS, PMP, CWP
MD Anderson Cancer Center

Lindsey Wolford, MS, RD, LD
MD Anderson Cancer Center

Adam Siegman, BA, CWP
Anderson Cancer Center

Winning Category: Best Overall

Background: Burnout can manifest in emotional exhaustion, lack of motivation, and feelings of frustration that may lead to a decline in work effectiveness. General Internal Medicine and Clinical Targeted Therapies team members are at risk for burnout due to work-related distress and high patient acuity.

Purpose: Leadership rounding and staff input identified a need to develop a wellness strategy to combat work-related stress and burnout from caring for oncology patients. The purpose of this project was to increase the number of employees with no burnout symptoms by 10% and reduce the number employees with work-related burnout symptoms by 20% with targeted wellness interventions over 3 years.

Methods: A multidisciplinary wellness committee reviewed the literature for best practices for wellness and institutional policies. A wellness needs and interest survey was provided for the staff, which led to the identification of unit-specific wellness priority areas. The wellness team provided the following interventions:

- Wellness sessions for day and night shifts with educational material on fitness, nutrition, and mindfulness;
- Self-care baskets; and
- Wellness financial grants to develop fitness space and tranquility rooms.

Evaluation: Implementing unit-specific wellness interventions demonstrated positive results for employee and organizational well-being. The baseline score for employees with no burnout symptoms was 37% in 2017 and increased to 69% in 2020, yielding an improvement of 32%. The baseline score for employees with work-related burnout symptoms was 63% in 2017 and decreased to 31% in 2020, yielding an improvement of 32%.

Implications: The implications for oncology nursing practice include nursing leadership support of staff well-being initiatives specific to the unit's needs. Empowering department wellness champions to take a multifaceted approach can help to improve work-related burnout. In response to the project outcomes and staff feedback, initiatives are underway to increase the frequency of these wellness interventions.

Author Correspondence:

Evan Thoman, MS, PMP, CWP

elthoman@mdanderson.org

State of the Science of Interventions for Prolonged Grief Disorder: Opportunities and Implications for Academic Communities

Vinisha Dsouza, RN, MSN (MH), Ph.D. Candidate
University of North Carolina Chapel Hill

Brandy Reardon, RN, Ph.D.
University of North Carolina Chapel Hill

Cheryl L. Woods Giscombé, RN, Ph.D., PMHNP-BC, FAAN
University of North Carolina Chapel Hill

Winning Category: Most Scalable

Background: Prolonged grief disorder (PGD), a newly introduced diagnostic condition in DSM-5-TR, is a persistent and pervasive response that affects beyond an individual's cultural, social, and religious norms and significantly impacts crucial areas (personal, family, and occupation) of functioning. Internet-based cognitive behavior therapy (ICBT) is a gold standard for treating grief. Yet, despite the steady rise in culturally adapted ICBT interventions for mental health, retention remains a significant issue in patient engagement and participation among members of academic communities.

Purpose: The purpose of this review was to identify the impact of retention strategies on the effectiveness of ICBT for PGD.

Methods: A systematic review of PGD Randomized Control Trials was conducted to map retention strategies and efficacy using PRISMA 2020 guidelines.

Results: We identified six PGD interventional studies with an intent-to-treat analysis. Despite a maximum drop-out rate of 27.9%, the studies obtained a high effect size (0.56-0.97). All the study therapists attempted to either support or facilitate conversations as and when approached by the participant; however, they could not maintain the sample size for their study. Given that the drop-out affects the sample size required for reasonable precision and power, we suggest using meaningful change definitions (MCD) obtained on the continuous variable of interest for determining the small effect size of interest (SESOI). We also conclude that an individualized therapy approach is essential for retaining the study participants.

Implications: COVID-19 pandemic-associated deaths have created unresolved grief in social and academic environments, generating an impending need for PGD-preventing interventional studies. This review's findings can help interventionists accommodate grieving academic personnel by providing essential grief support, thus enriching the occupational functioning of academic communities. Results can also guide researchers to use retention strategies to bring culturally diverse representation in evidence-based interventions to uplift health equity and reduce care disparities.

Author Correspondence:

Vinisha Dsouza, RN, MSN (MH), Ph.D. (C)

vdsouza@unc.edu

Identification of Barriers Faced by the Transgender Community Within the Fitness Industry

Ashton Simon, BS

University of North Carolina Wilmington

Winning Categories: Most Impactful and Most Innovative

Background: Transgender and gender nonconforming people face daily challenges in higher education institutions due to the lack of gender inclusive resources. This shortcoming is rooted in the minimal knowledge of what barriers affect this population. It is widely known that participation in regular exercise improves health outcomes and quality of life for all individuals.

Purpose: This study aimed to identify the barriers faced by the transgender community in the fitness industry and develop interventions to alleviate those barriers at higher education facilities.

Methods: Using a combination of a survey and fitness assessments, participants shared their experiences in fitness as it relates to their gender and provided data for the development of gender-neutral fitness standards for muscular strength, endurance, and body composition.

Results: This study found that on average, 23% more transgender and gender non-conforming people feel that gendered fitness standards do not apply to them than cisgender people, and that they are less comfortable in fitness spaces than their cisgender counterparts. Results also showed that when using both male and female calculations to assess body composition, people were receiving no less accurate results for using the calculation that does not align with their biological sex.

Implications: While these small-scale results provide a starting point for future research on gender-neutral standards, they are also able to provide guidance for the next steps of interventions and research in this field.

Author Correspondence:

Ashton Simon, BS

simonaj@uncw.edu

The “Lavender Room”: Adapting a Front-line Provider Wellbeing and Restorative Space for a School of Nursing

Nia M. Martin, MSN-Ed, RN
Loma Linda University

Vannessa Chavez, MSN-Ed, RN
Loma Linda University

Lydia Curteman, DNP, RN, PHN
Loma Linda University

Adrienne Martinez-Hollingsworth, PhD, MSN, RN, PHN
Samuel Merritt University

Kiersten Edwards, B.S. Neuroscience, B.S. Public Health
Samuel Merritt University

Winning Category: Most Sustainable

Background: Stress in the nursing field has increased during the COVID-19 pandemic, increasing rates of burnout and turnover. In response, an academic medical center in the Western United States implemented a restorative space to support provider wellbeing and recovery. During this time, School of Nursing (SON) faculty, staff, and students often shared these challenging spaces with frontline providers. However, there was little recognition of the need to extend this program to support classroom-based nurses and nurses-in-training.

Purpose: The purpose of this project was to describe the adaptation of a frontline healthcare worker (HCW) restorative space for use among faculty, staff, and students in a SON.

Methods: The project lead used space given by university administration to replicate a restorative space within the SON. The space was painted a soothing lavender and contained various wellness-augmenting resources including prayer cards, meditation videos, snacks, water sounds, and comfortable seating. Faculty, staff, and students were invited to use this room to support their wellbeing throughout the day.

Results: University administration recognized the need for a designated space for faculty, staff, and students to restore health. The project has enabled university stakeholders to ruminate on how to incorporate quantitative findings from this effort into a larger university-wide strategy to address increased burnout in HCWs and the future nursing workforce.

Implications: To sustain the nursing profession, it is essential that nursing faculty are included in burnout mitigation programming and that nursing students are empowered to practice self-care during intense academic training. Low-cost projects like the “Lavender Room” provide an opportunity to promote wellbeing, resilience, stress, and burnout reduction, and reduce high rates of turnover in this essential workforce.

Author Correspondence:

Nia M. Martin, MSN-Ed, RN

nmartin@llu.edu