

Service Evaluation of Headucate's Educational Intervention to Reduce Stigma and Increase Mental Health Literacy Among School Children

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Background

With one in ten young people being affected by ill mental health and stigma regularly cited as a factor affecting access to early intervention services, focussing resources on school based stigma reduction strategies seems prudent. 'Headucate', a student society, designed a 50 minute workshop which aims to increase mental health literacy and decrease stigma.

Methodology

Repeated, cross sectional surveys were carried out at three time points; 1) immediately before (n=77), 2) Immediately after (n=81) and 3) three months post workshop (n=73). The surveys were paper based versions of the Reported Intended Behaviours Score (RIBS) and Mental Health Knowledge Scale (MAKS) utilising a social distance scale.

Results

Four year 10 classed (pupils aged 14-15) were recruited. Post hoc t-tests were carried out when one-way ANOVAS were significant.

Disorder knowledge (from MAKS) and intended contact (from RIBS) significantly increased between time points one and two ($p < 0.01$ and < 0.004 respectively) but then decreased.

Analysis of the question pertaining to knowing where to access help showed a statistically significant increase ($p < 0.001$) between time points one and two and then a decrease at time three, albeit to a higher value than at time point one (3.45 compared to 3.13, $P = 0.088$).

Discussion

Headucate workshops offer a low resource option which is well accepted by students. Like other school based stigma reduction strategies, a dramatic increase was seen between immediately before and after indicating that the workshop resonates with the pupils, but there was little sustained change in attitudes.