

Implementation of a telementoring program for professionals providing care for concurrent disorders

Category: Symposium Presentation

Abstract Body

Individuals with co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders (i.e. concurrent disorders [CDs]) often experience poorer health and functioning and limited access to adequate care than people with a single disorder. In Canada, health care professionals and community workers are often asked to manage CDs with limited or no training. The Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes (ECHO) Model® is a modality that uses videoconference technology to support and train professionals in the management of diverse health conditions. The objective of this presentation is to describe the implementation of an ECHO program for CD (ECHO-CD) and to report on its preliminary impacts among trained professionals in the province of Quebec, Canada. In this prospective cohort study, data was collected over a 12-month period using repeated online surveys. All trainees were invited to participate in this study. The primary outcome was HCPs' self-efficacy in CD management; secondary outcomes included knowledge in CDs and attitude towards people with CDs. Measures of satisfaction and acceptability of the program were also assessed. 174 HCPs participated in this study. Participants had a mean age of 39.8 years (SD=10.1), 85.6% were female and 65.2% worked in community-based or primary health care settings. Compared to baseline, participants (n=90/174) showed significant improvement in self-efficacy, knowledge and attitude scores at 12-month post-ECHO-CD, least-squares means difference (95% CI) of: 0.4 (0.2; 0.7), 10.2 (7.9;12.4) and -10.9 (-14.8; -7.1), with respective effect sizes of 0.33, 0.87 and -0.54. Satisfaction and acceptability with the program were mostly highly rated across all domains at the 6-month follow-up (n=124), with mean scores ranging from 5.0 (SD=1.1) to 5.7 (SD=1.4). ECHO-CDs appears to be a promising tele-mentoring model to improve HCPs' competence in managing CDs, but further research is needed to assess its impacts on patients' health outcomes. Lessons learned and future adaptations to improve support for healthcare professionals will also be discussed.

Key Words

- Concurrent Disorders
- Medical Co-Morbidities
- Quality Improvement
- Technology

Learning Objective # 1

Summarize the needs for specific training to improve professionals' ability to manage concurrent disorders

Learning Objective # 2

Describe the potential benefits of a telementoring program for concurrent disorders management

Reference # 1

McBain RK, Sousa JL, Rose AJ, Baxi SM, Faherty LJ, Taplin C, Chappel A, Fischer SH. Impact of project ECHO models of medical tele-education: a systematic review. *J Gen Intern Med.* 2019;34(12):2842–2857.

Reference # 2

Chicoine G, Côté J, Pepin J, Boyer L, Rouleau G, Jutras-Aswad D. Experiences and perceptions of nurses participating in an interprofessional, videoconference-based educational programme on concurrent mental health and substance use disorders: a qualitative study. *BMC Nurs.* 2022 Jul 4;21(1):177.

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