Notice of the Final Oral Examination for the Degree of Master of Science of

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BSc (University of Victoria, 2005)

“Impact of a Mental Health Training Program for General Practitioners on Practice Behaviour”

School of Health Information Science

Monday, November 21, 2016
11:00AM
Human and Social Development Building
Room A202

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. Abdul Roudsari, School of Health Information Science, University of Victoria (Supervisor)
Dr. Jeff Barnett, School of Health Information Science, UVic (Member)
Dr. Omid Shabestari, School of Health Information Science, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:
Dr. Michael Hayes, School of Public Health and Social Policy, UVic

Chair of Oral Examination:
Dr. Ruthanne Tobin, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, UVic

Dr. David Capson, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies
Abstract

Background: Accrual of continuing medical education credits is part of licensure in family medicine but opinions are mixed as to whether the training has an impact on clinical practice. Literature does suggest that practice change is most likely when training involves multiple interactive exposures, and when the benefit to patients is apparent.

Aim: To determine whether an interactive peer-lead educational intervention for General Practitioners in British Columbia, the Practice Support Program Mental Health Module, resulted in measureable change in clinical practice of the Vancouver Island participants.

Method: Administrative information from British Columbia Ministry of Health databases was obtained for analysis regarding physician billing and prescribing, and hospitalizations on Vancouver Island. Paired t-tests were used to compare physician-patient interactions among module participants before and after the training regarding a) initiating antidepressants and anti-anxiety medication, and b) use of the mental health plan billing code, used to support patients who struggle with activities of daily living. In addition, mental health hospitalizations among participants' patients before and after training were used to measure its impact on patient outcomes.

Results: One-hundred and ninety-seven General Practitioners on Vancouver Island completed the mental health module between 2008 and 2011. While no significant difference was found in the numbers of mental health patients seen during the pre- and post- periods (M=142.06, SD=97.45) and (M=144.44, SD=103.00); t(196)=-0.679, p=0.498, α=.05, the change in the proportion of new prescriptions between pre-period mean (M=0.0796, SD=.06527) and post-period means (M=.0530, SD=.03877); t(195)=6.668, p<0.001 was found to be significant and indicative of a relative decrease between 31.2 and 33.4%. The change in the proportion of mental health plans was also found to be significant between pre-period (M=0.1142, SD=.018598) and post-period means (M=.1674, SD=.23973); t(180)=-3.586, p<0.001. This indicated a relative increase between 42.0 and 46.6%. No significant change in patient hospitalizations was found between the pre- and post-periods: (M=0.039, SD=.0612) and post-period means (M=.0392, SD=.0978); t(192)=-0.055, p=0.956.

Conclusion: This educational intervention appears to have resulted in significant changes in the practice patterns of the physician participants. Future research using better indicators may reveal more about patient outcomes.