

A Nepali-Canadian Interdisciplinary Collaboration for Continuing Professional Development

Authors: Melanie van Soeren* (Memorial University of Newfoundland, Canada), Renu Adhikari (Women's Rehabilitation Centre, Nepal), Bebi Shah (Tarangini Foundation, Nepal), Sunita Shrestha (Tarangini Foundation, Nepal), Sushama Regmi (Tarangini Foundation, Nepal), Jill Allison (Memorial University of Newfoundland, Canada)
(*=presenting author)

Background:

Psychosocial counselors supported by the Women's Rehabilitation Centre (WOREC) and the Tarangini Foundation have identified a need for continuing professional development to meet the mental health needs of the people of Nepal. These counselors have potential as knowledge ambassadors within their local interdisciplinary communities. Memorial University's Care of Underserved Populations (CUP) fellowship program has partnered with WOREC with the goal of 1) providing counselors with new information on specific modes of practice, 2) working collaboratively to adapt new information to the local context, and 3) developing train the trainer workshops to disseminate the information to practitioners in the community. This is intended to be an ongoing partnership based on collaboration, sustainability and meaningful impact to support and empower the local professionals to make and maintain the changes that are important to their communities.

Program Description:

The first workshop covered the topic of Trauma Informed Care (TIC) and was developed through a collaboration between the CUP fellow and members of WOREC and the Tarangini foundation. It was presented over two days in Kathmandu, Nepal in June 2018 to eleven psychosocial counselors. Content included: an overview of psychological trauma, its causes, impacts and prevalence; the core-principles of TIC ; trauma exposure response; and approaches to maintaining self-care while supporting individuals who have experienced trauma. Contextual methods for supporting interdisciplinary colleagues and institutions in implementing TIC were discussed. A pre- and post-workshop survey assessed knowledge, expectations and satisfaction with the workshop.

Results:

There was an improvement in knowledge related to TIC as assessed by fifteen true or false questions. There was also a subjective improvement in comfort with the content including understanding, applying and teaching TIC. Suggestions for improvement include lengthening the workshop and spending additional time on application of concepts at systemic levels.

Conclusion:

This workshop successfully conveyed concepts identified by representatives of the target audience as important to their professional development. This format is a feasible approach to facilitating interprofessional collaboration in a global health setting. Future directions include developing a dissemination strategy for the workshop concepts using organizational networks in Nepal and designing a curriculum for ongoing professional development.