

A Self-Help Intervention for Caregivers of People Diagnosed with an Eating Disorder

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INTRODUCTION and PROBLEM

Problem:

Caregivers of people diagnosed with eating disorders (ED) are often overwhelmed by the many challenges of caring for a loved one with an ED. They experience increased levels of anxiety, burden, depression, and a decreased level of quality of life (Anastasiadou et al., 2014; Las Hayas et al., 2014; Martin et al., 2015). Unfortunately, the needs of the caregivers are often neglected.

Purpose:

The purpose of this evidence-based practice (EBP) project is to support caregivers of patients diagnosed with anorexia nervosa (AN), bulimia nervosa (BN), and other specified feeding or eating disorders (OSFED) by delivering an empirically-supported self-help intervention designed to decrease caregiving burden and illness-maintaining behaviors.



PROJECT OBJECTIVES

1. Participating caregivers of ED patients will experience a decrease in caregiving burden after 6 weeks of self-paced intervention.
2. Participating caregivers will demonstrate a decrease in accommodating and enabling behaviors (e.g., repeatedly reassuring patients regarding their body image or accommodating ritualistic eating habits) after 6 weeks of self-paced intervention.
3. Participating caregivers will demonstrate a decrease in expressed emotions after 6 weeks of self-paced intervention.

Project Evaluation

- Descriptive analysis will be utilized to evaluate each objective
- Participants will complete postintervention interviews
- Participants will complete pre-post questionnaires via Qualtrics
- Questionnaires include:
 - Burden Assessment Scale
 - Accommodating and Enabling scale for Eating Disorders
 - Family Questionnaire
 - These questionnaires are design to evaluate caregiving burden, accommodating/enabling behaviors, and levels of expressed emotions, respectively.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Iowa Model

This model helps facilitate the development and implementation of a self-help intervention for caregivers of people diagnosed with eating disorders in a regional eating disorder treatment center

The Cognitive Interpersonal Maintenance Model (CIMM)

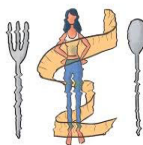
The model explains the intrapersonal and interpersonal factors that could cause or maintain Anorexia Nervosa (AN). The self-help intervention was developed based on this model.

Intrapersonal

Cognitive rigidity, Perfectionistic mindset, Avoidant personality
Weak set-shifting (switching tasks), Weak central coherence

Interpersonal

High expressed emotions, Accommodating/Enabling behaviors



PROJECT DESIGN

Project Type

This EBP project is a practice improvement project.

Sample

The project will implement a rolling admission and utilize a case series design, in which participants are selected based on shared characteristics (i.e., caregivers of individuals with EDs)

Method .

The intervention is self-paced over six weeks

Participants will receive educational materials developed by Dr. Janet Treasure and her colleagues

- A hard copy or an electronic version of the self-help manual: Skills-based Caring for a Loved One with an Eating Disorder
- A link to access the training videos
- A weekly email to remind them to review their materials.

Resources

Self-help manuals and DVDs
Information technology support
Expert Opinion of committee members



Timeline

Literature Review: February – May 2020

Plan development: May – September 2020

Proposal Meeting: September 2, 2020

Implementation: January 2021 (First Participant Enrolled)

Data Collection: April 2021 (First Data collected)

Defense: January 2022

Dissemination: March 2022

References available upon request