

Do Scottish Community Nurses enable people with long term conditions to self-manage depression and/or anxiety?

Julie Churchill ^{1, 2, 4}, Dr David Banks ¹,
Hilda Campbell ³,
Professor Brendan McCormack ¹, Professor Jan Dewing ¹,
Queens Nursing Institute Scotland (QNIS) ⁴

Affiliation: ¹QMU ² NHS Lothian ³ COPE Scotland ⁴ QNIS

Context

- People living with long term conditions often describe features of depression and/or anxiety which negatively impact on post diagnosis care, and quality of personal and family life and relationships.
- Our project explores how Scottish Community Nurses assess and deliver interventions to people with families and carers, and how they coordinate with other professionals to support care as well as offering advice on self-management.



Project aim

- The overall aim of the project explores attitudes and behaviours of Scottish community nurses caring for individuals experiencing depression and/or anxiety associated with living with a long-term condition.
- This specifically includes understanding what nurses in these roles would find helpful to increase awareness of, and confidence in, their ability to offer advice and support.
- This project seeks to enable Scottish community nurses to offer appropriate support, so people have a greater sense of wellbeing and experience.



Key outcomes

- A pyramid event with people with long-term conditions and experience of depression and/or anxiety highlighted catharsis achieved in sharing experiences.
- These group discussions highlighted qualities people with long term conditions sought from care givers. Participants were more likely to comment on listening skills and compassion. Such qualities were perceived to be less concerned with technical ability.
- Literature review key points included availability of education, and challenges for community nurses negotiating time out of practice for such professional development. In addition, 'Our Voice Citizens Panel' (2016) survey identified GPs and the Practice Nurses as 'most trusted' primary care workers.



Key outcomes cont.

- The Citizens Panel data revealed discussing mental health issues was highly stigmatised topic. Such discussion unlikely to be initiated by would-be patients without prompting from primary care staff.
- The Health Education England (HEE) (2017) report assumed UK practice nurses generally 'unskilled' for anticipated future service needs. Our findings particularly challenge HEE assumptions around current competence of practice nurses in working with people with mental health needs.



Key outcomes cont.

1. The project revealed wide range of practices including some excellent examples of holistic care. Structurally, the expectations of strategic leaders potentially constrict professional development of practice nursing. These findings echo results in the Health Education England paper.
2. Recognition of caring for the self as a care giver became an area of consideration for the project. If we are talking about mental health, we need to think also about how nurses are feeling. This has further implications for further curriculum development and research activities within QMU.



Methodology

- Methods were co-designed with COPE members. This was important because living with a long-term condition clearly informed their opinions on what they would find useful for Scottish community nurses to know, in helping them to manage their anxiety and depression.
- A series of in-depth interviews with 20 community nurses employed at different clinical grades, including team leaders within six Scottish Health Boards. The field work was funded by QNIS.
- *Ethical approval for this work based learning project was secured through QMU Edinburgh.*



Outputs so far

- The online survey has been re-timetabled as part of this project and will become part of the wider longer-term research project.
- Filmed 'Masterclasses' with expert practitioners on supporting people with depression and/or anxiety with the context of long-term conditions. These will be distributed by QNIS, COPE Scotland and QMU Undergraduate and Postgraduate curriculum.
- Meetings with QNIS to discuss specific person-centred practice development projects for Scottish Community Nurses.



Outputs so far cont.

- Poster presentation at NHS Lothian research and development Conference 2019.
- Presentation at International Research Conference 2019.
- Invitation to publish an article in RCN Primary Care Journal.
- Literature review to be published in 2020.
- Field work is scheduled for publication in 2020 as a qualitative research paper.



Key references

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Thank you

Any questions?



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