Beyond Silence in Healthcare: Tools to Support Workplace Mental Health

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ROADMAPS TO RESILIENCE CONFERENCE
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Acknowledgements

• Beyond Silence “scale up” project funded by the Government of Ontario

• Beyond Silence app project funded by a CIHR Catalyst Grant on Work Stress and Wellbeing

• Project partners include:
  Kim Slade & Glenn Cullen, Public Services Health and Safety Association

• Lisa Wolfe, project coordinator
1. Why “Beyond Silence?”
2. Program Development & Evaluation
   a) Champion Training
   b) Peer Educator Training
   c) Online community of Practice
3. Action plans for individual/organizational change
4. Mobile health application
5. Take home messages
My story....

"IN TODAY’S KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY, THE HEAVY LIFTING IS DONE WITH OUR MINDS, NOT OUR BACKS"
(Dewa et al, 2004)
The story continued....

It’s weird that there’s this discomfort around speaking openly about it. There is such an irony. It’s a mental health institution and these are supposed to be mental health professionals and yet they have such a hard time talking about mental health when it’s us and not the clients.

I think a lot of people carry this sense that they have to be perfect, you have to have the answers and they can’t admit that they’re struggling - certainly not in the field that they’re supposed to be the helper in. -Fran
Why "Beyond Silence"?

Moral case

Human case

Business case
Why “Beyond Silence”? 

- Mental health problems (esp. depression & anxiety) in the workplace are the fastest growing category of disability costs in Canada (Wilson et al., 2002)
- Healthcare workers are more likely to miss work & be absent for more days than workers in other sectors (CIHI, 2005)
- High proportion of healthcare workers continue to work despite mental health problems (Gartner et al, 2013)
- Often a long lag time between the onset of symptoms & receiving treatment (Kessler & Frank, 1997; Moll, 2013)
- Delays in seeking help can lead to escalation of social tensions, mistakes, poor quality of care
What gets in the way of reaching out for help?
Uncertainty in identifying mental health issues

Lack of timely access to support

Confidentiality expectations

Workload pressures

Social tensions

Stigma

Discourse of professional competence

Where to focus?

- Wellness programs
- Primary prevention
- Early Identification & support
  - Mental health literacy training
- Workplace accommodation
- Tx & RTW
Beyond Silence Elements

2-day workplace training program

2-day “train the trainer” program

Mobile app

+ Online “community of practice” (webinars, discussion forum)
Beyond Silence Champion Training

- Customized for healthcare
- Led by trained peer educators
- Opportunity for dialogue/discussion to build mental health literacy, and practice opportunities to develop skills for reaching out
- Focus not only on changing individual behaviors but the overall workplace
Champion Training

Agenda

DAY 1
S1 – Why should I care?
S2 – How do I know?
S3 – How can I help?

DAY 2
S4 – Knowing what works
S5 – Becoming a mental health champion

Evaluation

• pre, post, 3 & 6 month follow up surveys
• perceived knowledge, stigma, confidence in reaching out, behavior change
Healthcare perspective

- [https://beyonsilence.ca/](https://beyonsilence.ca/)
Goals for change

[Reduced] Stigma

[Improved] Mental health literacy

[Positive] Attitudes towards treatment

Early identification and intervention
a) Help seeking
b) Help outreach

Appropriate utilization of mental health services

Long-term outcomes
- faster recovery
- improved productivity
- reduced sick leave
Randomized Clinical Trial

- 183 healthcare workers randomly assigned to either Beyond Silence or Mental Health First Aid training
- Pre/post & 3 month follow-up to track changes in knowledge beliefs and behaviors + qualitative feedback
- Key findings:
  - Significant increase in knowledge (both groups)
  - Significant increase in confidence to reach out to others (both groups)
  - Significant decrease in stigmatized behaviors (both groups), but more sustained change in the Beyond Silence participants
  - No apparent change in help-seeking or help-outreach behaviors over time in either group
  - Preference for opportunity to share stories & contextually relevant information

What was missing?

- Resource-intensive program
- Large healthcare organization
- Need for sustained support over time
Next Project (OHSPiP)

"Beyond Silence" - Peer led education to facilitate mental health support for Ontario's health care workers (Ontario Ministry of Labour - Feb 2018 to Feb 2020)

Focus: small, under-resourced organizations across Ontario

2 year project:

- 8 mental health champion training programs across the province with up to 30 registrants in each program.
- 3 peer educator facilitator training programs
- Community of practice network with monthly WebEx conferencing and an online forum
Participant Demographics

- 84% female
- Average age: 46 years (SD=9); Range 22-71 years
- Job tenure average: 13 years (SD=10)
- Job role:
  - Manager/supervisor: 52%
  - Clinical services: 15%
  - Non-clinical support: 15%
- Personal experience with mental health issues
  - 54% yes
  - 29% no
  - 12% unsure
### Outcomes (pre/post)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Baseline</th>
<th>Follow-up</th>
<th>Coefficient (95%CI)</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MH Knowledge</td>
<td>4.7 (1.4)</td>
<td>5.8 (0.7)</td>
<td>1.2 (0.9 to 1.4)</td>
<td>&lt;0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MH Literacy</td>
<td>49.6 (12.7)</td>
<td>66.0 (7.8)</td>
<td>16.3 (13.9 to 18.8)</td>
<td>&lt;0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stigma</td>
<td>43.8 (8.2)</td>
<td>40.2 (7.7)</td>
<td>-3.5 (-4.7 to -2.3)</td>
<td>&lt;0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach Skill</td>
<td>40.3 (9.3)</td>
<td>46.0 (7.1)</td>
<td>5.7 (4.1 to 7.3)</td>
<td>&lt;0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach Confidence</td>
<td>4.9 (1.3)</td>
<td>5.9 (0.7)</td>
<td>1.0 (0.8 to 1.2)</td>
<td>&lt;0.000</td>
</tr>
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</table>

- "I found the information & tools very useful. I appreciate the lists of tangible follow up resources. I enjoyed all the scenario examples, and could find similar ones in my workplace....“ (P3-2)
Beyond Silence Peer Educator Training Information Manual

Contact-based education to promote early intervention and support for the mental health of healthcare workers

Hamilton – November 2018
Contact Based Education

- Persons with a mental illness share their experience with peers
- Most effective
  1. for reducing stigma
  2. Attitudinal change
  3. Behavior change

Martin & Johnson, 2007; Stuart, Arbolenda-Florez & Sartorius, 2012
Contact-Based Education

- Experience with mental illness
- Similar professional background
- Resources and tools
- Shared learning experience
‘I will be there for you’

“I feel that as a facilitator it is important to share your own lived experiences to set the tone of the room, and to allow people to know that it is okay for them to share their experiences, it is a safe environment and it is really important to open up with that discussion”

“I could be that person for my friend why couldn’t I be that person for my co-worker and then why couldn’t I be that person for my agency”
Monthly Webinars

- Free, monthly Webinars for all graduates (over lunch hour)
- Range of topics related to workplace mental health & healthcare work
- Topics generated based on suggestions from trainees
Creating Action Plans for change
Individual Action Plans

Personal workplace action plan
- Triggers
- Cues
- Strategies
- Resources/supports

Organizational Action Plans

Guarding Minds at Work

Assess, protect and promote psychological health and safety

https://www.guardingmindsatwork.ca

Welcome to StressAssess

A survey of the psychosocial factors in your workplace

Organizational Action Plans


http://resources.beyondblue.org.au/prism/file?token=BL/1728

Leadership in Healthcare

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UVMB8HsP2A&feature=youtu.be

Join the movement – be a health leader

Sign the Declaration

The *By Health for Health Collaborative* of Canada, led in partnership with the Mental Health Commission of Canada and HealthCareCAN, has a vision for healthcare workplaces to be leaders and role models in providing psychologically healthy and safe work environments for all Canadians.
OK, but what if I don’t want to go to a 2-day training program?
Goal: To create an online, evidence-based, information & support tool customized for healthcare workers

Meeting the challenge:
- reduce stigma of seeking help
- increase access to high quality info & support, particularly in small, under-resourced areas
- provide 24/7 on-demand assistance
App Development & Testing

Advisory Team
Oct 2017-Present
Regular meetings and feedback

CIHR Hackathon
June 4-6, 2017
Scope definition & Onboarding

SPRINT 1
July-Aug, 2017
Brand & Identity Development

SPRINT 2
Nov, 2017
Platform Development (wireframe development, creative development)

SPRINT 3 & 4
Jan-May, 2018
Technical Development

SPRINT 5-10
June-August, 2018
Alpha – Phase 1
Pilot Testing (n=10)

SPRINT 11 & 12
Sept – Dec, 2018
Beta Testing – Phase 2
(n=25)

User Test
Feb-March, 2019
Conversation Pathways

Your Check-in
- Beyond Silence
  - How are you doing?
    - Good
    - Not so good

Explore & Learn
- See All
  - Assess your stress
  - Breathe

Support
- Beyond Silence
  - What do you need help with?
    - You
    - I need support

- Beyond Silence
  - What kind of support do you need?
    - You
    - I'm Stressed/Anxious

- Beyond Silence
  - Sorry to hear that you are stressed/anxious.
    - Beyond Silence
    - How bad is it?
      - The worst
      - Worse than usual
      - Same as usual
      - Not as bad as usual

- Beyond Silence
  - Stress can get in the way of lots of things.
  - If it is getting to be a problem, I have some ideas about what might help.

- Beyond Silence
  - Choose a tip from my list to learn more. Let me know if it helps!

- Stressed / Anxious
  - Assess your stress
What kind of support do you need?

a) I’m Stressed/Anxious
b) I’m tired
c) I’m down/discouraged
d) I’m upset/angry
e) I’m scared/ feeling unsafe
# Articles for Pathway #1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stressed/Anxious</th>
<th>Tired</th>
<th>Down</th>
<th>Upset</th>
<th>Scared/Unsafe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assess your Stress</strong></td>
<td><strong>Calm</strong></td>
<td><strong>Difficult &amp; Dangerous Clients</strong></td>
<td><strong>Triggers</strong></td>
<td><strong>Bullying &amp; Harassment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Breathe</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sleep</strong></td>
<td><strong>Suffering &amp; Loss</strong></td>
<td><strong>Re-think &amp; Re-frame</strong></td>
<td><strong>PTSD/Vicarious trauma</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recharge</strong></td>
<td><strong>Surviving shiftwork</strong></td>
<td><strong>Re-think &amp; Re-frame</strong></td>
<td><strong>PTSD/Vicarious trauma</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reach out</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Set Boundaries</strong></td>
<td><strong>Re-energize</strong></td>
<td><strong>Get moving and get outside</strong></td>
<td><strong>Talk about it</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reach out</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research shows that mindfulness can calm your mind, reduce distress and burnout, and improve mental well-being.

A good place to start is mindful breathing. Try taking five slow, deep breaths. Or try a 3-minute "breathing space" (focus on counting to 3 to inhale and 3 to exhale over a period of 3 minutes). Make it a regular habit.

There are many resources to help:
- Try this [TED talk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dQw4w9WgXcQ) (9 mins) for inspiration
- Download a free app to build guided meditation into your daily routine:
  - [https://www.oakmeditation.com](https://www.oakmeditation.com)
  - [https://www.calm.com](https://www.calm.com)
  - [https://www.stopbreathethink.com](https://www.stopbreathethink.com)
Check-In

Pathway 1: Support for me
Pathway 2: Support for co-worker
Pathway 3: Resources

- Distressed/Anxious
- Bullying
- Safety/Performance

What are you concerned about?
1. Co-worker distressed
2. Co-worker bullying/harassment
3. Safety/Performance issues
Additional Features

**Tap here for help**
In order to suggest resources that best meet your needs, I need to ask a few questions:

- **Beyond Silence**
  - Is this a crisis where you need immediate help? (e.g., danger of hurting self or others)
  - Yes  No

**Talk Directly to a Mentor**
One of the features of this app is the opportunity to talk to a peer mentor who has personal experience with mental health issues. You can identify the person you would like to connect with and you will be connected through email/text.

- Ian Moor
  - Clinician
- Mark Mills
  - Clinician

**Wellness Temperature**
- I'm Well
- In Crisis
  - (Set Your Temperature)

**Your Temperature**
- Your temperature is good:
  - Based on what Beyond Silence app has learned from you, you seem to be in a good state of mind

**Temperature History**

**Set a New Goal**
- What goal would you like to set?

**Choose a suggestion:**
- Or write your own goal here.

**When would you like to achieve this goal?**
- 1 Day from Now

**Support**

**Wellness**

**Goals**
Beta Testing

- 24 participants from 7 small, under-resourced healthcare organizations
- Testing app for 4 weeks
- Pre/post Impact evaluation: awareness, mental health knowledge/ literacy, stigmatized beliefs, behavior change
- Feedback (survey + focus group) on: Engagement, functionality, aesthetics, content, suggestions for improvement
Take Home Messages

- Not ‘one size fits all’ - need multi-pronged approach
- Growing # of tools & resources, but varied quality
- Need high quality, evidence-informed approaches
- Importance of contextually-relevant information
- Need to optimize access – right info at the right time

- Others?
References


Questions/ Comments?

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Beyond Silence website:  www.beyondsilence.ca