

ONLINE ACCEPTANCE AND COMMITMENT TO EMPOWERMENT (ACE) TRAINING TO INCREASE RESILIENCE AND PROMOTE SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EQUITY IN RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC

Jing Wen (Jenny) Liu, PhD
University Health Network
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Background: During a global pandemic, it is essential to develop ways to support the mental health and resilience of those most highly impacted by the pandemic. The pandemic may not affect everyone equitably. For example, frontline healthcare providers face the stress of increased work demands, fear of getting infected themselves or transmitting the infection to their family, and rapidly changing health protocols, while the Chinese Canadian community has been severely impacted by racism and discrimination in addition to pandemic-related stress.

Objectives: Discuss the design and findings of an online intervention to increase the resilience and wellbeing of healthcare providers (HCP) and Chinese Canadian community (CH-COM).
Methods: Based on Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) and principles of Social Justice and Equity, we developed an intervention model, Acceptance and Commitment to Empowerment (ACE), to enhance psychological resilience and collective empowerment. In view of social distancing precautions, our intervention is delivered online by interdisciplinary facilitators, consisting of 6 interactive self-guided modules complemented by 6 weekly video-conference group sessions. Eligible participants are diverse in their background, and consist of HCP and CH-COM. Participants are evaluated at pre, post, and 3-month follow-up in their resilience (MSMR), empowerment (ES), and mental distress (GHQ).

Results: To date, we have recruited 42 HCP and 41 CH-COM. Preliminary results from our first two pilot groups, including 13 HCP and 14 CH-COM, provide early evidence that the group is feasible and well accepted. There was a significant improvement from pre to post in MSMR and ES, and significant reductions GHQ scores.

Conclusions: Preliminary findings suggest that a hybrid self-directed and group online intervention based on the ACE model is an effective way of increasing resilience and empowerment while reducing mental distress during the pandemic.

Full List of Authors

Jenny JW Liu, Josephine Wong, Alan Li, Mateusz Zurowski, & Kenneth Fung

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to:

1. Participants will be able to identify factors that shaped the rapid design, development, and deployment of a blended-learning intervention program to promote resilience.

2. Participants will be able to determine the efficacy of this intervention program on a number of outcomes, including resilience, psychological flexibility, overall wellbeing, and empowerment capacity.

References

1. Li AT, Fung KP, Maticka-Tyndale E, Wong JP. Effects of HIV stigma reduction interventions in diasporic communities: insights from the CHAMP study. *AIDS Care*. 2018;30:739-745.

2. Fung KP, Liu JJW, Sin R et al. & Wong JP. Exploring mental illness stigma among Asian men mobilized to become Community Mental Health Ambassadors in Toronto Canada. *Ethn Health*. 2019;1-19.