

Journal Watch – Administration & Palliative Care Programs - July 2018

Article:

Mindfulness and compassion-oriented practices at work reduce distress and enhance self-care of palliative care teams: a mixed-method evaluation of an “on the job” program

Orellana-Rios CL, Radbruch L, Kern M, Regel YU, Anton A, Sinclair S, Schmidt S

BMC Palliat Care. 2017 Jul 6;17(1):3.

Article link: doi: 10.1186/s12904-017-0219-7.

Review:

Strengths: use of validated tools measuring a variety of constructs, both qualitative and quantitative measures. Variety of health professions included. Good explanation of study analysis.

Weaknesses: single center in Germany. Lack of control group. Small sample size. Reported effects may be influenced by the attention provided by the evaluators or by an organizational focus on self-care issues. 5 weeks of mediation training may be too short to unlock its full potential

Relevance to Palliative Care: Health care workers in palliative care are faced with inherent stressors which can lead to stress, burnout, psychological morbidity and compassion fatigue. Although the roots of compassion seem to be innate, compassion qualities can be cultivated or eroded over time. Programs such as the one in this study which can be implemented into the practice setting, may help to sustain compassion and nurture it over time. The interplay of compassion and wellbeing needs further study.