

P-552 – HELPING BEYOND SKILLS AND ETHICS: CULTIVATING COMPASSION SATISFACTION AMONG HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS WORKING ON ART IN HONG KONG

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STUDY QUESTION: How effective is the professional training course on infertility counseling for healthcare professionals working in ART settings in cultivating their professional quality of life in terms of compassion satisfaction and compassion fatigue?

SUMMARY ANSWER: The course could effectively enhance the professional quality of life in terms of Compassion Satisfaction (CS). For healthcare professionals working in ART where patients face much uncertainty and uncontrollability, it is important to cultivate CS in order to guarantee both parties' interest, quality of service and life satisfaction.

WHAT IS KNOWN ALREADY: Professional quality of life incorporates two aspects, the positive (Compassion Satisfaction) and the negative (Compassion Fatigue). While abundance of research focused on the job burnout and compassion fatigue among healthcare professional, less attention has been put about compassion satisfaction. CS refers to the positive feeling of job satisfaction derived from doing helping work effectively. People with higher CS will feel contentment, experience positive thoughts and enjoy the work they do.

STUDY DESIGN, SIZE, DURATION: This is a quasi-experimental design. Two to three healthcare professionals from 11 licensed ART clinics from public or private hospitals were nominated to attend. The course consisted of nine 3-hour weekly sessions spanning two months, with self-reflective exercises like mindfulness training, compassionate meditation, and reflections on meaning of life.

PARTICIPANTS/MATERIALS, SETTING, METHODS: 25 healthcare professionals (doctors, nurses, and embryologists) working in ART settings were invited to complete a self-administered questionnaire before and after the course. The questionnaire was comprised of Professional Quality of Life (ProQol) measuring Compassion Satisfaction and Compassion Fatigue (Burnout and Secondary Trauma) and measures related to psychological wellbeing.

MAIN RESULTS AND THE ROLE OF CHANCE: It was found that the participants showed significant improvement in CS after attending the course (Pre-course: 33.94 ± 4.4 ; Post-course: 36.35 ± 3.82 , $t = -3.29$, $p < 0.005$). However, no significant difference was found in Compassionate Fatigue (Secondary Trauma and Burnout) under ProQol. This showed that regardless of no improvement in Compassionate Fatigue, it is essential to uphold their CS. Healthcare professionals who were younger in age and with lower education level showed greater improvement in CS ($p < 0.05$). Moreover, those who have religious beliefs showed significant improvement in CS as well ($p < 0.05$). Another interesting area is, those who work longer in general medical settings, but shorter in ART field showed significant improvement as well.

LIMITATIONS, REASON FOR CAUTION: This is a professional training course with limited number of participants. No random assignment could be performed. In order to evaluate the course in greater details, qualitative analysis such as focus group and interviews should be conducted to obtain better understanding about their compassion satisfaction in working in ART.

WIDER IMPLICATIONS OF THE FINDINGS: There are a lot of studies focusing on the alleviation of compassion fatigue, while very few on cultivating healthcare professionals' compassion satisfaction. From a positive perspective in enhancing a positive feeling and satisfaction among helping professionals, it is believed that both themselves and service recipients can benefit from better service quality and prevent burnout. This component should thus be taken into consideration in the professional training programme in infertility counseling.