0846

The Caring Campus Project – Using an occupational perspective in health promotion and community mobilization to target substance misuse on post-secondary campuses

Shu-Ping Chen[1], Terry Krupa[2]
[1]*University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB, Canada,* [2]*Queen's University, Kingston, ON, Canada*

Introduction. There is concern that the activity patterns of university students are increasingly characterized by substance misuse that jeopardizes the student role and negatively impacts health and well-being.

Objectives. Using an occupational perspective that focused on how substance use is entrenched in the daily living patterns of students, the 3-year Caring Campus Project aimed to engage students in reducing harmful patterns of substance use.

Methods/Approaches. Three evidence-informed approaches were used to actively engage students in changing the meaning of substance use in their lives and the conditions that supported use. These included: (1) Substance Use Wellness Tool - encouraged student self-reflection on their own substance use; (2) Contact-based education - students with substance-use problems shared their experiences to reduce stigma and bridge the gap between awareness and action; and (3) Student Summits - empowered student leaders to promote sustainable cultural change.

Results/Practice implication. Three levels of impacts were evaluated: (1) Immediate outcome - personal capacity: over 62.1% of the student population had knowledge of Caring Campus initiatives; 2) Intermediate outcome - cultural and structural shift: sustainable student action groups were enabled to lead student-designed activities to actualize a campus cultural shift; 3) Distal outcome - changes across systems: Knowledge Translation activities mobilized the broad application of the Caring Campus model.

Conclusion. This project used an occupational perspective to raise awareness of the link between the daily activities of being a student and substance misuse and health and well-being, and mobilized the campus community to support sustainable change.