Re-thinking Validation: MSU’s Gatekeeper Evaluation

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Disclaimer

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Overview

- Our initial evaluation
- Brief summary of the literature on gatekeeper evaluation
- Re-thinking our evaluation – new strategies
- Influence on sustainability and long-term change
Our initial evaluation

- Demonstrated significant increases in knowledge about suicidality
- Participants reported high levels of satisfaction with the training
- Only a very small proportion of participants endorsed using the skills.
  - Many endorsed apprehension to ask about suicidality
- Increase in referrals to the counseling center, not clear how many were from our gatekeeper training
Important questions lead to gatekeeper training development

- Why do we do gatekeeper training? What is the behavior we want to see?
- How do we assess this?
- Satisfaction and knowledge ≠ competence
Isaac et al., 2009 Gatekeeper Training as a Preventative Intervention for Suicide: A Systematic Review

Table 2 Sources, study types, level of evidence, population, and effects seen on skills, attitudes, and knowledge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Study type</th>
<th>Level*</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wyman et al 19</td>
<td>RCT</td>
<td>1B</td>
<td>342 school staff</td>
<td>Increase in self-reported knowledge, appraisals of efficacy, and service access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tierney 25</td>
<td>Cohort</td>
<td>2B</td>
<td>36 intervention abilities study subjects, 176 knowledge and attitudes study subjects</td>
<td>Significant improvement in intervention skills in simulated situations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King and Smith 20</td>
<td>Cohort</td>
<td>2B</td>
<td>186 school counsellors</td>
<td>Increased skills, attitudes, and knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capp et al 17</td>
<td>Cohort</td>
<td>2B</td>
<td>44 Australian Aboriginal community members</td>
<td>Increase in knowledge, intention to help, and confidence in identification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stuart et al 23</td>
<td>Cohort</td>
<td>2B</td>
<td>65 Canadian adolescents</td>
<td>Increase in skills, attitudes, and knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chagnon et al 22</td>
<td>Cohort</td>
<td>2B</td>
<td>71 youth workers</td>
<td>Increase in skill, attitudes, and knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthieu et al 26</td>
<td>Cohort</td>
<td>2B</td>
<td>602 US Veterans Affairs workers</td>
<td>Increase in knowledge and self-efficacy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Based on the Oxford Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine levels of evidence. 1A: systematic review of RCTs; 1B: individual RCT; 2A: systematic review of cohort studies; 2B: individual cohort study, low-quality RCT; 2C: ecological studies; 3A: systematic review of case–control studies; 3B: individual case–control study; 4: case series, poor quality cohort, and case–control studies.
Gatekeeper literature

- Most studies focus on knowledge, not skills or behaviors
- A literature showing reductions in suicide exists, almost impossible to do this at a college level
- Cross et al. (2007) added in roleplays. Participants were satisfied, but only about half showed satisfactory skills post-training.
- Cross et al. (2010) evaluated a brief gatekeeper training at a college. 10% proficient with skills before training, 54% after
- SAMHSA evaluation showed longer trainings led to more individuals identified (Condron, et al., 2015)
But would they have identified students anyway?

McLean and Becker (2017) randomized RAs to a suicide prevention training or a stress and time management training. No difference in referrals over next 4 months.
What do we care about (what should we assess)?

- Are people competent to use the skills?
  - E.g. Cross et al. 2007 and 2010
- Are people using the skills more than they normally would?
  - Randomized studies like McLean and Becker (2017)
Re-thinking our evaluation

- New gatekeeper training focused on teaching and practicing skills vs. knowledge
- Competency-based evaluation
  - Observational Rating Scale of Gatekeeper Skills (ORS-GS; Cross et al., 2010)
  - Recruit theater majors as standardized patients
  - Additional training available to those who don’t pass assessment
- Follow-up to assess skills use
Influence on Sustainability and Long-Term Change

- Participants won’t use the skills if they are not comfortable with them
- Focusing on competence may increase the number of individuals identified per trainee
  - Empirical question
- Long-term follow-up to examine the need for booster trainings