

Knowledge and Attitudes of Trainees Regarding Psychopharmacological Management of Patients with Human Immunodeficiency Virus: A Quality Improvement Project

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Background: High rates of mental health disorders are commonly observed in individuals living with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). This patient demographic faces additional challenges, including engagement in risky behaviors and reduced adherence to treatment. Given their vulnerable status and heightened susceptibility to issues like substance abuse and trauma, physicians play a pivotal role in the holistic care of HIV patients. Moreover, physicians have a unique and essential opportunity to establish enduring relationships with these patients, enabling them to contribute significantly to HIV prevention, patient empowerment, and fostering positive behavioral changes. Despite this vital relationship, little education is provided to trainees on the topic of HIV.

Objectives: In this study, we set out to determine the effect that education can have on the understanding of HIV care and the interest and confidence of trainees in treating patients with HIV.

Methods: Survey involving six knowledge-based questions and two attitude-based questions was conducted before and after a 20-minute presentation regarding neuropsychiatric pathologies in patients with HIV and drug-drug interactions between HIV and psychotropic medications to trainees at the University of Toledo Medical Center. Knowledge-based questions were multiple-choice questions based on the content of the presentation. Attitude-based questions were regarding the level of trainees' confidence and interest in treating patients with HIV using Likert-scale questionnaires.

Results: The preliminary data analysis included seven psychiatry residents (n=7, PGY1-PGY3, 57% female, 29% male, 14% preferred not to answer). There was an overall increase in the percent of correct answers of knowledge-based questions from 47.6% before the presentation to 83.3% following the presentation (p<0.001). Both the mode and median of the responses to the statement, "I am confident in my ability to provide psychopharmacological care to

patients with HIV” transitioned from “disagree” before the presentation to “agree” following the presentation. Meanwhile, both the mode and the median of the responses to the statement, “I am interested in providing psychopharmacological care for patients with HIV in the future” remained consistent at “agree” both before and after the presentation.

Conclusion: Given the increase in knowledge after the presentation, we concluded that a presentation is an effective and efficient way to convey information about topics that trainees do not have adequate exposure to, such as HIV. Additionally, the study revealed there is interest among trainees in caring for patients with HIV, as evident by a median of “agree” for the interest question, but currently they do not have enough education, as evident by median responses of “disagree” for the confidence question before presentation. The preliminary results of this study indicate that educational formats such as oral presentations are an effective way to educate trainees on the psychopharmacological management of patients with HIV.