

Community Workshops on ADHD Improve ADHD Knowledge and Help-Seeking Behaviour

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Background

Attention Deficit/ Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) affects between 4-12% of school aged children^{1, 8}. At any one time approximately 380,000 children in Canada are diagnosed with ADHD^{3,5}. The stigma associated with a diagnosis of ADHD and lack of proper information about ADHD results in underdiagnosis, poor compliance with treatment and poor outcomes for children and families with ADHD^{2, 4}. A multidisciplinary diverse community team with a shared vision was established in 2006 in Windsor, Ontario. It was spearheaded, in this case, by a pediatrician. The team developed a community-based campaign to raise awareness about ADHD.

Methods

Conferences were organized by the members of the ADHD Awareness Committee between 2006-2009. September was designated ADHD Awareness month in Windsor and Essex County and each September a variety of speakers and events were held. The full report for each year's activities may be found at <http://www.adhdwindsor.com>.

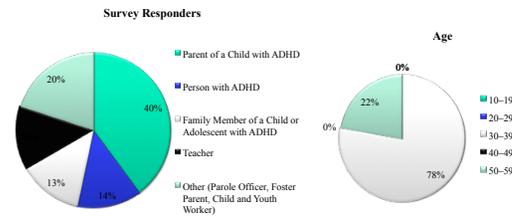
In March 2011, an internet survey was sent to 69 of the participants who previously attended the workshops and who had signed up with email addresses. There were 10 surveys completed after the survey request was sent twice. The results reported here are those from an internet survey given to ADHD Awareness Windsor workshop attendees in March 2011 about their knowledge, attitudes, help-seeking behaviour, and patient service delivery preference.

Results

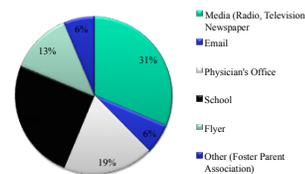
There was a low response rate and therefore the results of the survey may not be accurate. The findings however are in tandem with the growing body of evidence that supports psychoeducation and health literacy, as means of improving knowledge, attitudes and behaviour with regard to mental health.

- 90% of responders strongly agreed or agreed that the workshops improved their understanding of ADHD.
- 100% of responders strongly agreed or agreed that there is stigma associated with ADHD.
- 87% of responders agreed or strongly agreed that they felt more comfortable accessing ADHD services as a result of the workshops.
- 90% of responders strongly agreed or agreed with having ADHD services delivered at a school-based multidisciplinary clinic, or via the internet; 80% for physician's office; 70% for community health clinic and 60% for mental health agency.

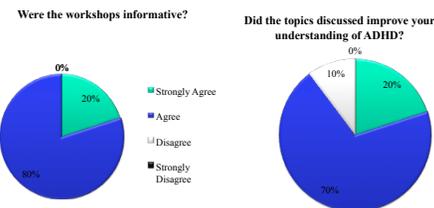
Demographics



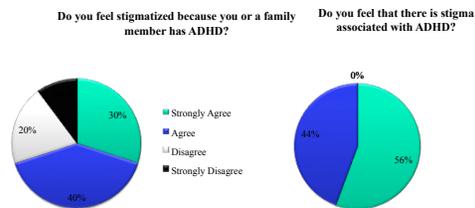
Promotional Media



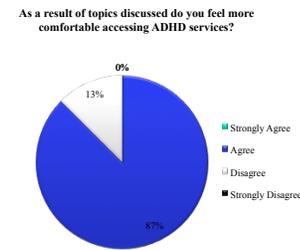
Knowledge



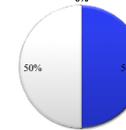
Attitudes



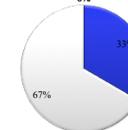
Help-seeking Behaviour



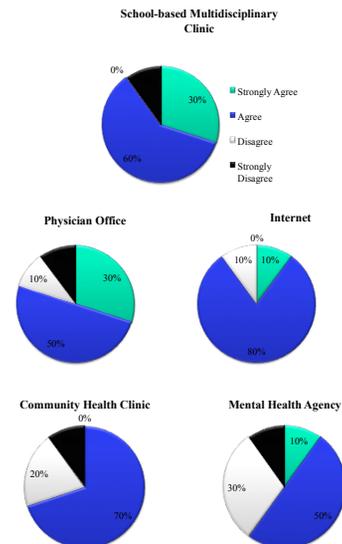
As a result of topics discussed, have you used more mental health services?



As a result of topics discussed, have you used less mental health services?



Service Delivery Preference



Conclusions

Community workshops can improve knowledge and affect ADHD help-seeking behaviour. Responders preferred overwhelmingly (90%) to receive ADHD health services in school-based clinics or via the internet. In an era where patient-centered care is now the new standard, we have to move away from old models of care delivery to ones which have at their center the patient and family. At the very least new funding models and partnerships for physicians and other health providers need to be supported, so that children can receive more school-based ADHD health-related services and services in primary care settings. Local community awareness workshops lead by local physicians or health care partners who are able to sustain social network ties may be very important in reducing stigma as well as improving knowledge and help-seeking behaviors of ADHD families. Implications - Further funding of community awareness workshops and research into their effectiveness in reducing stigma, improving knowledge and help-seeking behaviour as well as health outcomes is warranted.

References

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