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# Digital mental health literacy program for first-year medical students in Finland

**Submission date**
12/05/2021

**Recruitment status**
No longer recruiting

**Registration date**
26/05/2021

**Overall study status**
Completed

**Last Edited**
10/11/2021

**Condition category**
Mental and Behavioural Disorders

[ ] Prospectively registered
[X] Protocol
[ ] Statistical analysis plan
[X] Results
[ ] Individual participant data

## Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims
Medical students are prone to mental disorders such as depression and anxiety. The psychological burden is mainly related to the high demands of the studies. There is a need to implement interventions that improve medical students' mental health literacy and wellbeing. This study aims to investigate the impact of a digital mental health literacy program Transitions with blended life skill and mindfulness components among first-year medical students.

Who can participate?
First-year medical students.

What does the study involve?
The student will have to register in the digital program platform in order to participate in the study. The program involves two lectures and independent learning of the digital material in between the lectures. The data are collected from the participants using electronic questionnaires three times in total: before the program starts (baseline), immediately after completing the program and 2 months after the baseline.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?
The students' knowledge about mental health may increase, their attitudes towards mental health can become more positive and their help-seeking behavior may be enhanced. The study may also strengthen the students' stress management skills and alleviate emotional (mainly anxiety and stress) symptoms. A data processing impact assessment has been conducted, and data protection matters have been carefully considered and both technical and organizational protective measures have been undertaken. Risks related to data protection are minimal and other risks have not been identified in the study.

Where is the study run from?
University of Turku (Finland)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?
From March 2017 to February 2020

Who is funding the study?
The Academy of Finland (Finland)

Who is the main contact?
Dr. Marjo Kurki, mhkurk@utu.fi

# Contact information

### Type(s)
Scientific

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# Additional identifiers

# Study information

### Scientific Title
Digital mental health literacy -program for first-year medical students' wellbeing: single-group quasi-experimental study

### Study objectives
Digital Transitions will improve first-year medical students' knowledge about mental health, decrease stigma associated with mental health problems, and improve help-seeking attitudes.

### Ethics approval required
Old ethics approval format

### Ethics approval(s)
Approved 03/05/2017, Ethics Committee for Human Sciences at the University of Turku (FI-20014 University of Turku, Finland; eettinen@utu.fi; +358 50 303 0346), no ref

### Primary study design
Interventional

## Study design
One-group quasi-experimental design

## Study type(s)
Prevention

## Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied
Prevention of mental health problems by increasing students' knowledge about mental health, improving their attitudes towards mental health problems, enhancing help-seeking behavior as well as promotion of wellbeing and stress management.

## Interventions
The intervention consists of two in-person lectures lasting 60 min each, delivered by a mental health professional, and a digital self-learning material. The first lecture focuses on strategies for independent living and studying, while the second lecture focuses on mental health, and stress management and mental disorders, help-seeking, and treatment. In between the lectures, the students have approximately 4 weeks to learn the digital material.

Participants were also encouraged to practice stress management skills, including mindfulness exercises at any time during the course. The digital transitions consisted of three themes addressing life skill resources and mental health topics. Theme 1 comprised of important skills for independent living and academic life strategies. Theme 2 comprised of strategies on how to obtain and maintain sound mental health, and stress management skills. Theme 3 comprised of mental disorders, related treatment and help-seeking.

## Intervention Type
Behavioural

## Primary outcome(s)
Mental health literacy, which comprises the following aspects:
1. Knowledge about mental health measured using an adapted mental health literacy measurement instrument as electronic questionnaires that were embedded in the program platform at baseline (at the beginning of the first lecture), pre-intervention, 4 weeks (at the end of the second lecture), and 2 months
2. Attitudes towards mental health and help-seeking measured using at an adapted mental health literacy measurement instrument as electronic questionnaires that were embedded in the program platform baseline, 4 weeks, and 2 months
3. Help-seeking behaviour measured using an adapted mental health literacy measurement instrument as electronic questionnaires that were embedded in the program platform at baseline, 4 weeks, and 2 months

## Key secondary outcome(s)
1. Perceived stress measured using the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) at baseline, 4 weeks, and 2 months
2. Emotional health measured using the General Health Questionnaire-12 (GHQ-12) at baseline, 4 weeks, and 2 months

## Completion date
15/02/2020

# Eligibility

**Key inclusion criteria**
First-year medical student

**Participant type(s)**
Other

**Healthy volunteers allowed**
No

**Age group**
Adult

**Sex**
All

**Total final enrolment**
186

**Key exclusion criteria**
Does not meet inclusion criteria

**Date of first enrolment**
01/09/2018

**Date of final enrolment**
30/08/2019

# Locations

**Countries of recruitment**
Finland

**Study participating centre**
**University of Turku**
Teutori 3rd floor
Lemminkäisenkatu 3
Turku
Finland
20014

# Sponsor information

**Organisation**

Academy of Finland

**ROR**
https://ror.org/05k73zm37

# Funder(s)

**Funder type**
Government

**Funder Name**
Academy of Finland

**Alternative Name(s)**
Academy of Finland, Suomen Akatemia, Finlands Akademi, AKA

**Funding Body Type**
Government organisation

**Funding Body Subtype**
Research institutes and centers

**Location**
Finland

# Results and Publications

**Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan**
The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study are not expected to be made available due to data protection policies of University of Turku, Finland, and EU GDPR. The collected data include sensitive and identifiable data.

**IPD sharing plan summary**
Not expected to be made available

**Study outputs**

| Output type | Details | Date created | Date added | Peer reviewed? | Patient-facing? |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Results article | | 06/11/2021 | 10/11/2021 | Yes | No |
| Participant information sheet | version v1 | 18/04/2017 | 01/06/2021 | No | Yes |
| Protocol file | version v1 | 18/04/2017 | 01/06/2021 | No | No |
| Study website | Study website | 11/11/2025 | 11/11/2025 | No | Yes |