ISRCTN68926489 https://doi.org/10.1186/ISRCTN68926489

Evaluation of a participatory anti-stigma seminar for nurses in training [Evaluation eines partizipativen Anti-Stigma Seminars für Auszubildende in der Pflege]

Submission date
30/10/2024

Recruitment status
No longer recruiting

Registration date
13/01/2025

Overall study status
Completed

Last Edited
02/07/2025

Condition category
Mental and Behavioural Disorders

[ ] Prospectively registered
[ ] Protocol
[ ] Statistical analysis plan
[ ] Results
[ ] Individual participant data
[ ] Record updated in last year

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims
In the healthcare system, structural discrimination against people with mental illness is repeatedly evident. They are often not treated or taken seriously because of somatic (body) issues or receive poorer somatic care, resulting in an increased death rate. To counteract this, it is necessary to address stigmatising attitudes of mental health staff. A central group in the medical system are nurses, as they are often in the most direct contact with patients and spend the most time with them. Across studies, it has been shown that nurses' attitudes towards mental illness significantly influence the quality of care and that nurses provide poorer medical care when a psychiatric diagnosis is disclosed. Anti-stigma interventions for the target group of nurses are therefore promising for achieving improved healthcare for people with mental illness. This study investigates whether a participatory anti-stigma seminar for nurses in training can lead to a significant reduction in stigmatising attitudes towards severe mental illness (SMI).

Who can participate?
Nurses in training who are training at the nursing school of the University Medical Centre Hamburg-Eppendorf, Germany

What does the study involve?
Participation in the study involves one-time attendance at a participatory anti-stigma seminar (intervention seminar) or attendance at a non-participatory seminar on psychiatry and psychotherapy (control seminar). Classes of the nursing school are randomly allocated to the intervention or control seminar. Participants complete questionnaires on stigma, mental health literacy, micro-aggression, and preparedness and confidence in working in mental health nursing at three points in time directly before the start of the seminar, after the end of the seminar and as a follow-up after 3 months.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?
The benefit of participating in the study is the opportunity to learn more about stigma,

psychiatry and psychotherapy and to question one's own stigmatising attitudes. In the long term, this should improve the care provided by nurses for people with SMI.
The risk of participating in the study is the confrontation with potentially stressful content from mental health crises. Mental health staff are available for the participants throughout the seminar.

Where is the study run from?
University Medical Centre Hamburg-Eppendorf (Germany)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?
July 2023 to December 2025

Who is funding the study?
Federal Ministry of Health (Germany)

Who is the main contact?
Dr Candelaria Mahlke, c.mahlke@uke.de

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Public, Scientific

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Additional identifiers

Study information

Scientific Title
Cluster randomised evaluation of a participatory anti-stigma seminar for nurses in training compared with a non-participatory control seminar to assess the reduction of stigmatising attitudes towards severe mental illness (SMI). [Cluster-randomisierte Evaluation eines partizipativen Anti-Stigma-Seminars für Auszubildene in der Pflege im Vergleich zu einem nicht partizipativen Kontrollseminar in Bezug auf die Reduktion von stigmatisierenden Einstellungen gegenüber schweren psychischen Erkrankungen (SMI)]

Study objectives
The study investigates whether a participatory anti-stigma seminar can reduce stigmatising attitudes among nurses in training towards severe mental illness (SMI).

The following hypotheses regarding the effectiveness of the intervention will be tested:
1. Nurses in training who attended the participatory anti-stigma seminar show significantly less stigmatising attitudes towards SMI after the seminar compared to nurses in training who attended the non-participatory control seminar.
2. Nurses in training who attended the participatory anti-stigma seminar show significantly less micro-aggression behaviors perpetrated towards persons with mental illness after the seminar compared to nurses in training who attended the non-participatory control seminar.
3. Nurses in training who attended the participatory anti-stigma seminar show significantly more preparedness and confidence in working in mental health nursing after the seminar compared to nurses in training who attended the non-participatory control seminar.

Ethics approval required
Ethics approval required

Ethics approval(s)
Approved 22/04/2024, Local Psychological Ethics Committee at the Centre for Psychosocial Medicine of the University Medical Centre Hamburg-Eppendorf, Germany [Lokale Psychologische Ethikkommission am Zentrum für Psychosoziale Medizin (LPEK) des Universitätsklinikums Hamburg-Eppendorf, Deutschland] (University Medical Centre Hamburg-Eppendorf, Martinistreet 52, Hamburg, 20251, Germany; +49 (0)40 7410 – 0; LPEK@uke.de), ref: LPEK-0727

Primary study design
Interventional

Study design
Interventional single-centre cluster-randomized non-blind controlled trial

Study type(s)
Other

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied
Stigmatising attitudes towards severe mental illness (SMI)

Interventions
The intervention is implemented at the nursing school of the University Medical Centre Hamburg-Eppendorf, Germany. The intervention is a participatory, contact-based anti-stigma seminar. The seminar consists of four parts, including self-awareness, information, dialogue and reflection. The focus is on destigmatising contact between the participants through encounters with individuals with lived experience of mental health crises. The seminar comprises six lessons of 45 minutes each. It is led by at least three speakers, at least one of whom has lived experience of mental health crises, one of whom has experience of working in the psychiatric system and one of whom has experience from the perspective of a relative. In two preliminary studies, the seminar concept has already been tested for its effectiveness in reducing stigmatising attitudes among medical students and police officers and has been adapted to the target group of nurses in training.

The control seminar will be a non-participatory seminar. It will take a similar amount of time to the intervention seminar. The seminar will only be led by a speaker who has experience working in the psychiatric system. The content of the control seminar covers knowledge of mental health issues. It is methodically parallelised to the intervention seminar.

Either the intervention or the control seminar is only offered once per class at the nursing school. All classes in the nursing school are randomised as a cluster and randomly assigned to the intervention or control conditions. The randomization will be carried out using a permuted-block randomization, to guarantee the same number of classes in each arm. Therefore, a randomisation list based on all classes of the nursing school will be created using an online randomization tool.

Before the seminar begins, informed consent is obtained for participation in the study and the baseline measurement (T0) is completed. A second measurement (T1) is completed at the end of the seminar. Both measurements are carried out with paper and pencil. Participants who agree to be contacted again will be contacted 3 months after the end of the seminar to participate online in a follow-up measurement (T2).

Intervention Type
Other

Primary outcome(s)
Stigmatising attitudes towards SMI will be assessed at baseline (before the seminar begins), at T1 (after the seminar) and at a 3-month follow-up using a questionnaire. The questionnaire was developed in a participatory manner as part of this project.

Key secondary outcome(s)
1. Stigmatising attitudes will be assessed using the Opening Minds Stigma Scale for Healthcare Providers at baseline (before the seminar begins), at T1 (after the seminar) and at a 3-month follow-up.
2. Micro-aggression behaviors perpetrated towards persons with mental illness will be assessed using the Mental Illness Microaggressions Scale-Perpetrator Version (MIMS-P) at baseline (before the seminar begins), at T1 (after the seminar) and at a 3-month follow-up
3. Preparedness and confidence in working in mental health nursing will be assessed using nine items from Foster et al. (2019), who adapted a survey by Hayman-White & Happell (2005) at baseline (before the seminar begins), at T1 (after the seminar) and at a 3-month follow-up. The items will be translated to German.

Completion date
31/12/2025

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria
1. Participants must be trainees at the nursing school of the University Medical Centre Hamburg-Eppendorf, Germany
2. Participants must not have missed more than one lesson of the seminar in total
3. Participants must provide informed consent for study participation
4. Participants must be fluent in the German language

Participant type(s)
Learner/student

Healthy volunteers allowed
No

Age group
Mixed

Lower age limit
15 Years

Upper age limit
65 Years

Sex
All

Total final enrolment
360

Key exclusion criteria
Participants will be excluded:
1. If they are not trainees at the nursing school of the University Medical Centre Hamburg-Eppendorf, Germany
2. If they miss more than one lesson of the seminar in total
3. If they are unable or unwilling to provide written informed consent for study participation
4. If they do not have sufficient knowledge of German to answer the questionnaires

Date of first enrolment
01/11/2024

Date of final enrolment
12/06/2025

Locations

Countries of recruitment
Germany

Study participating centre
Working Group for Social Psychiatry and Participatory Research
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Sponsor information

Organisation
University Medical Center Hamburg-Eppendorf

ROR
https://ror.org/01zgy1s35

Funder(s)

Funder type
Government

Funder Name
Bundesministerium für Gesundheit

Alternative Name(s)
Federal Ministry of Health, Germany, Federal Ministry of Health, BMG

Funding Body Type
Government organisation

Funding Body Subtype
National government

Location
Germany

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan
The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study will be available upon request from Dr Candelaria Mahlke (c.mahlke@uke.de).

IPD sharing plan summary
Available on request