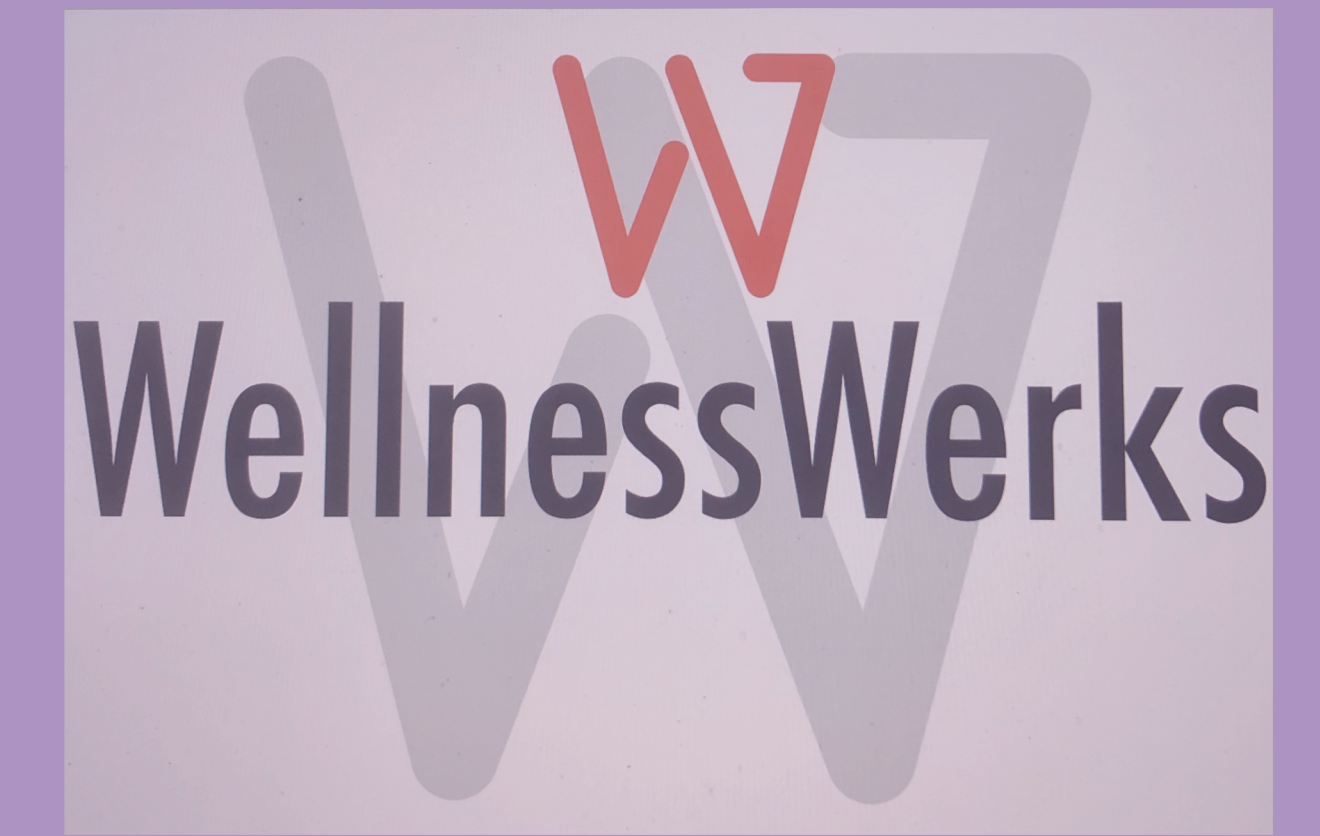


WellnessWerks: An Emotional Support Program For Healthcare Workers During the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Introduction

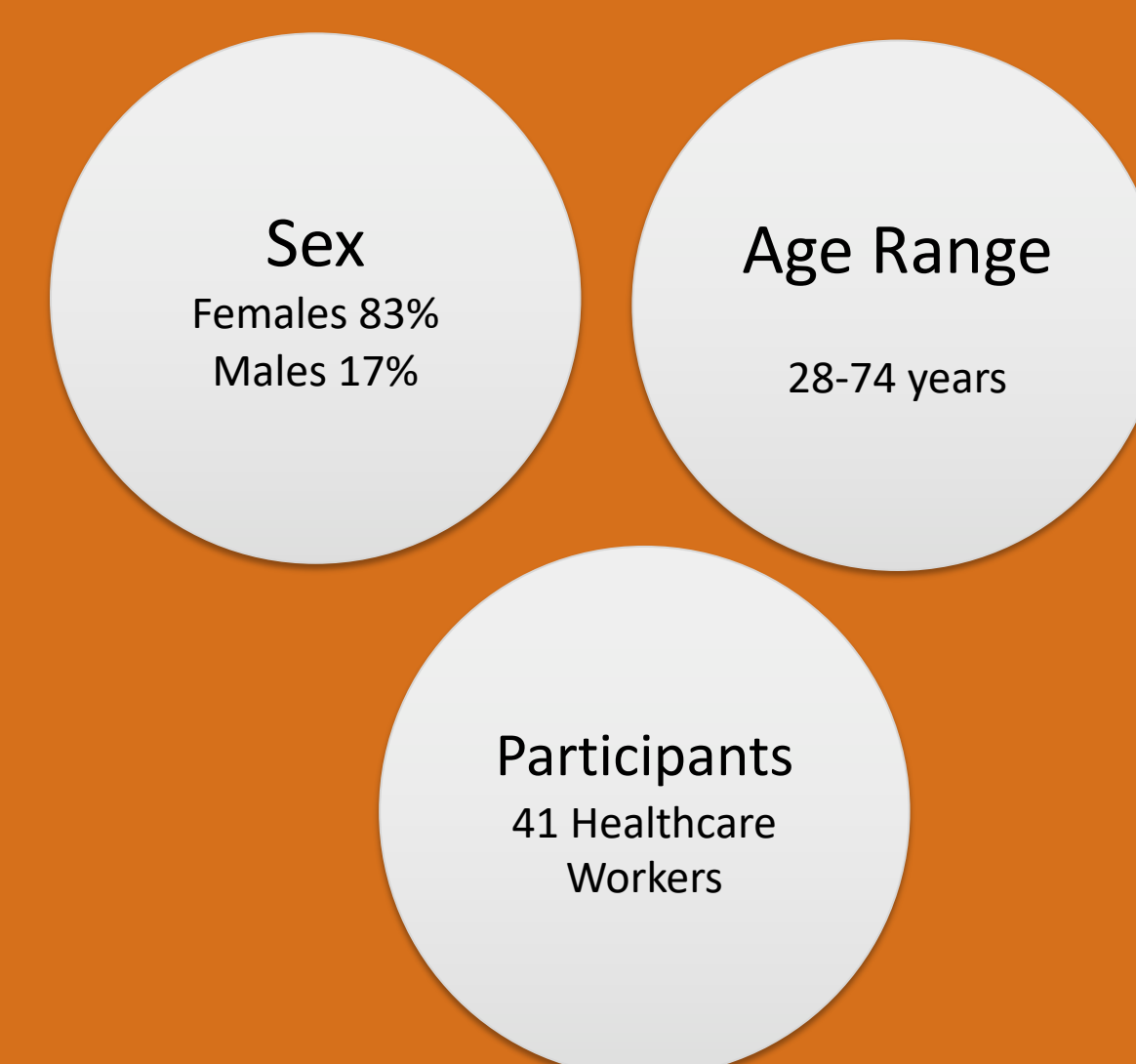
- Healthcare workers experience high levels of stress and burnout
- The COVID-19 pandemic has increased stress and anxiety
- An emotional wellness program for healthcare workers was implemented at an outpatient surgery center
- Stressors at work were identified through wellness sessions and leadership interviews
- Psychological safety scores were measured to assess how safe employees feel in discussing work-life challenges with co-workers

Methods

- Bi-weekly peer support sessions offered to healthcare workers at a free-standing outpatient surgery center
- Small group, 30-minute sessions
- Psychological Safety surveys administered to employees
- Interviews with department supervisors regarding stressors affecting team members

Results

Demographics



Effective Leadership

Supervisors were actively involved in patient care with their employees

Leaders easily identified the stressors affecting their teams

"The Wellness sessions made me feel like I wasn't in it alone"



Employee Stressors

Initial Stressors

Changes in the Delivery of Patient Care

Decreased Work Hours

Added Job Responsibilities

Fear of Infection

Stressors 3 months later

Lack of Supervision for Dependents

Decreased Household Income

Inadequate Childcare

Isolation

"This program bonded me with my co-workers"

"It felt good to talk about what we were going through"

Psychological Safety

Psychological safety scores were high before & after the WellnessWerks program

These findings demonstrated that participants felt comfortable sharing patient care issues with their co-workers and leadership before and after the program

"It proved to me that we truly have each other's backs"

Conclusions

- WellnessWerks was effectively implemented in an outpatient surgery center providing critical emotional support to employees during the COVID-19 pandemic
- There were high levels of engagement and participation in this peer support program
- Stressors were identified by employees and leadership and changed over time
- Some of the stressors were modified to improve employee satisfaction
- High psychological safety scores may reflect pre-existing strong personal and professional relationships leading to high functioning teams
- None of the employees utilized an off-site program offered by the employer
- WellnessWerks is widely applicable in multiple healthcare settings

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