**INTRODUCTION**

Hospice and palliative care workers are at a high risk for job burnout due to the intensive emotional labors of their jobs. Supervision or employee assistance programs can reduce this risk (Krivits, McAllister-Black, Grant & Kirk, 2010). Pereira, Fonseca, & Carvalho, 2011; Swetz, Harrington, Matsuyama, Shanafelt & Lyckholm, 2009). One particularly encouraging strategy in this area has been the incorporation of art therapy (Brooks, Brad, Eyre, Hunt and Dible, 2010; Italia, Fava, Seccus, Di Cataldo & Russo, 2008; Nairn, 2009). The art therapy based approach to burnout reduction aims to enhance self-awareness, increase ability of emotional expression and regulation, promote professional relationships and facilitate meaning making processes.

**OBJECTIVES**

Art therapy based supervision with hospice and palliative care workers would:

- lower incidences of burnout
- increase perception of professional efficacy
- facilitate connections with colleagues and enhance self-care and building professional relationships.

**METHODOLOGY**

We examined the efficacy of the art therapy based supervision group with social workers, nurses, doctors, chaplains and volunteers who work in hospice and palliative care settings. A standard supervision group of the same length and course topics served as a control group. Participants selected which supervision group to attend. All participants completed the Maslach Burnout Inventory - General Survey (Maslach, Jackson & Leiter, 1996) and Five Factor Mindfulness Questionnaire (Baer, Smith, Hopkins, Krietemeyer & Toney, 2006) at pre, post and 1 month intervals.

**RESULTS**

The study utilised the pilot stage and data collection is on-going (expected completion of June 2012). This presentation only reports on the findings from the first post assessment of the art therapy based supervision group compared with the first control group 21 participants completed the art therapy based supervision 23 participants in the control group.

**DISCUSSION**

The study showed preliminary evidence for the efficacy of art therapy based supervision. The results imply that participants might have gained a better sense of control over their thoughts and feelings, which might have contributed to their increased level of professional self-efficacy and reduction of exhaustion. Further, the group allowed for increased self-awareness, discovery of creative potential and forming connections with colleagues.

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**REFERENCES**


Burnout and Mindfulness Questionnaire

Similar results were found with regard to mindfulness. Participants in the control group showed significantly lower levels of abilities to describe their thoughts and feelings (p < 0.01), as well as, not reacting to them (p < 0.05). Participants in the art therapy based supervision showed a significant increase in their abilities to observe their thoughts and feelings (p < 0.05).