

AN EVALUATION OF AN AOD AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING INTERVENTION TARGETING YOUNG CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY WORKERS

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Introduction and Aims:

Young workers employed in the construction industry are at risk of AOD-related harm and poor psychological wellbeing. An evaluation of a brief wellbeing intervention, with demonstrated effectiveness in reducing risk among young hospitality industry workers, was undertaken.

Design and Methods:

169 first year apprentices enrolled in construction trade courses at SA TAFE colleges were recruited for the study and assigned to either the intervention (n=97) or control group (n=72). Baseline (T1) data were compared with 4-6 month post-intervention follow-up data (T2) to evaluate intervention effectiveness.

Results:

Participants had high AUDIT-C scores (M=5.5, SD=3.0) with 72.2% reporting a score indicative of problem drinking. 24.9% had used cannabis and 3.6% had used meth/amphetamine in the past month. 24.8% reported moderate/high levels of job stress, 15.4% reported high levels of psychological distress and 11.8% reported high levels of workplace bullying. Job stress and bullying were significantly associated with psychological distress ($r=.57, p<.0001$ & $r=.48, p<.0001$ respectively) and meth/amphetamine use ($r=.17, p=.026$ & $r=.17, p=.025$ respectively). There were no significant between group T2 differences in AOD or wellbeing measures. However, for the total sample, there was a significant T1-T2 decrease in self-rated health ($z=7.6, p<0.001$) and a significant T1-T2 increase in job stress ($t=3.6, p<.001$), absenteeism ($z=2.0, p=0.05$) and presenteeism ($z=2.7, p=0.006$).

Conclusions:

While results confirmed construction apprentices were a high risk group, the intervention did not reduce risk. This may be due to the intervention not being specifically designed to address issues directly relevant to construction industry apprentices.

Implications for Practice or Policy

Results confirmed construction apprentices were a high risk group for AOD-related harm and poor psychological wellbeing. The finding that physical and psychological wellbeing decreased over time, and that wellbeing indicators were associated with AOD use indicates effective wellbeing interventions are imperative.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

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