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| **Virtual ethnography of SingINg For breathing in COPD aNd ILD pAtients** |
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| **Introduction/Aim:**Many international in-person singing for lung health programs have demonstrated substantial benefits in improving participants’ breathlessness and quality of life, but the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic prompted a shift to online delivery. Limited research exists on how the online delivery of these programs impacts participants’ interactions and behaviours. This study aims to evaluate the impact of the digital format on participants’ engagement in an Australian-wide clinical trial “SINFONIA: A clinical trial examining the benefits of SingINg For breathing in COPD aNd ILD pAtients.”**Methods:** A virtual ethnographical approach was conducted, involving observations of 18 participants with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and interstitial lung disease across 20 weekly 1.5-hour sessions delivered on Zoom by two different singing leaders. Qualitative data were extracted and analysed, yielding descriptive and analytical themes. **Results:** Three themes emerged from the observations: 1. limits and possibilities of online delivery encompassing challenges such as managing technical issues; 2. evolution of group dynamics, highlighting the transformation and development of relationships and interactions; and 3. effectiveness of program delivery from the singing leader. As the singing program progressed, participants formed social connections that transcended geographical limitations, facilitated by Zoom features. Shared experiences of chronic respiratory diseases and technical challenges played a pivotal role in gradually forging the collective group identity. However, participants exhibited a reliance on the guidance of singing leaders, and in their absence due to technical glitches, challenges to the program’s continuity emerged, emphasising participants’ limited autonomy. **Conclusion:** The evolving relationships and group dynamics between the singing leader and participants were observed, highlighting the growth of group cohesion and the development of a collective identity in the face of technical disruptions. Future research should explore challenges associated with managing online group social dynamics and approaches for singing leaders to balance guidance and participant autonomy during singing for lung health sessions. |
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