

**Using Group Cognitive Behavioral Teletherapy to Increase Student Access to Counseling
Services: A Quality Improvement Project**

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Abstract

Background: Universities often lack the mental health services needed to meet demands of their student populations.

Local Problem: At times, Washington State University's (WSU) Health Sciences Campus struggles to keep up with the student demand for mental health services.

Purpose: The purpose of this Quality Improvement (QI) project was to increase access to mental health services on WSU's Health Sciences campus, without increasing the need for additional resources.

Methods: The Model for Improvement and Orlando's Nursing Process Theory were used to guide the project's intervention development and implementation based on stakeholder input and contextual data.

Intervention: This project implemented an 8-week cognitive behavioral group therapy session delivered via telehealth as a way to provide additional services. Pre- and post-intervention surveys were used to evaluate the intervention's effectiveness and provide feedback for future implementations.

Results: During the intervention, the UCC saw 35 total unique clients and conducted 312 total client appointments, both increases compared to the same time period of the previous year.

Conclusions: Counselors considered the outcomes of the project favorable because they were able to provide services to more students in a resource-conscious manner. Additionally, the attitudes of participants toward group therapy and its effectiveness predominantly improved.

[Keywords: Quality improvement, mental health, group therapy, college student, campus resources, telepsychiatry, cognitive behavioral therapy]