

RESEARCH PROPOSAL

A QUALITATIVE INVESTIGATION OF PHYSIOTHERAPISTS' ENCOUNTERS WITH PATIENTS WHO ARE IN MENTAL DISTRESS

A general mental health condition known as psychological distress is typified by the symptoms of anxiety and depression, but it can also entail other unfavorable emotions including guilt, grief, anger, and loneliness. Significant outcomes from psychological distress can include a lower quality of life, prolonged incapacity, and an earlier death.

Although psychological discomfort can sometimes be resolved on its own without the assistance of a professional, there are occasions when receiving assistance from formally qualified mental health experts can be beneficial for those who are experiencing psychological distress. Apart from mental health specialists, other essential health providers who provide professional help to individuals experiencing psychological discomfort include physiotherapy, podiatry, speech pathology, chiropractic, dentistry, and audiology.

The biological concept of health has long been supported by the physiotherapy profession, but a more recent paradigm change to a biopsychosocial model has increased awareness of the interdependence of the body and mind. Physiotherapists must grasp the psychosocial components of patients' problems in order to implement the biopsychosocial model. A number of studies have revealed that physiotherapists are reluctant to inquire about mental health concerns, such as suicide, and that they feel unprepared to assist patients who are experiencing poor mental health as a result of their lack of training in mental health.

Although a biopsychosocial approach is widely acknowledged, there is little guidance available for physiotherapists who work with patients who have psychological issues or mental health disorders. Research has also highlighted the lack of standardized education in the field regarding how to address patients' psychological well-being. This study set out to investigate the attitudes and treatment practices of physiotherapists toward patients who they perceived to be displaying symptoms of psychological distress.

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