

Implementing a Curriculum on Disaster Behavioral Health in a Psychiatry Residency Program

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Background

This current era of superimposed disasters, extreme events, humanitarian crises, and pandemic diseases is an opportune time to train psychiatry residents to become knowledgeable about disaster behavioral health (DBH) principles and skilled in applying DBH interventions.

Methods

A voluntary and anonymous electronic survey was distributed to psychiatry residents to assess interest in a disaster behavioral health course and to assess their current disaster behavioral health related knowledge and skill levels.

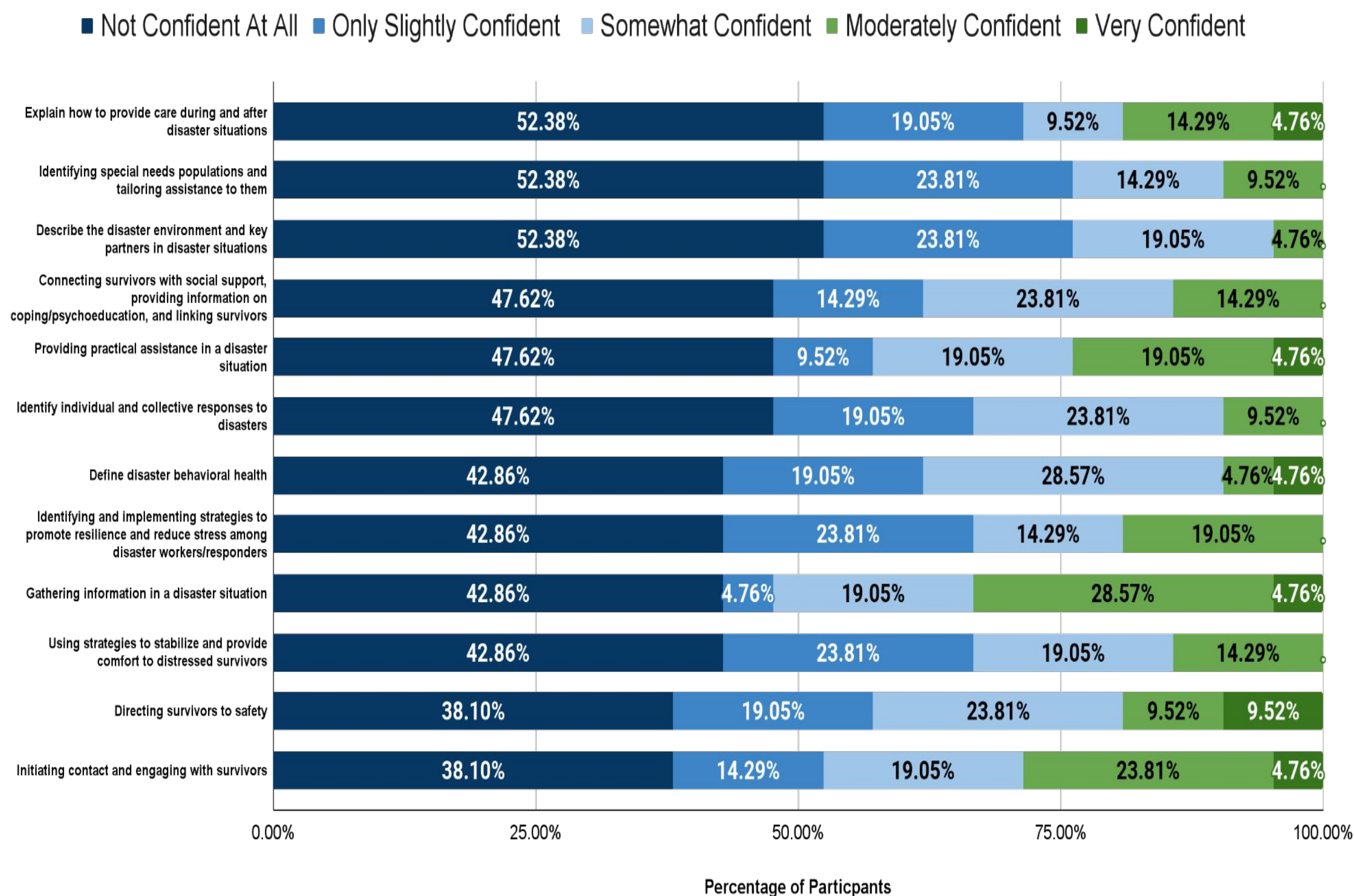
Residents were asked to rate their confidence in current knowledge level on various disaster behavioral health principles and skills using a 5-point likert scale.

21 residents participated (40% response rate)

- PGY1: 14.3%
- PGY2: 33.3%
- PGY3: 33.3%
- PGY4: 19.0%

Survey Results

Rate your Confidence in your Ability to Complete the Following Tasks Related to Disaster Behavioral Health



Resident survey results demonstrated limited knowledge of disaster behavioral health principles, low levels of confidence in skills to support the psychological needs of survivors, and strong interest in receiving training. 85.7% of participating residents indicated interested in attending classes on disaster behavioral health. So, we proceeded to develop a disaster behavioral health training curriculum for residents, starting with a lecture series featuring experts in the field.

Curriculum Outline

- Session 1: Defining Disaster Behavioral Health
- Session 2: Individual and Collective Responses to Disasters
- Session 3: Considerations for Special Populations
- Session 4: Providing Care Part 1
 - Psychological First Aid
 - Mental Health First Aid
 - Mindfulness Based Strategies
 - Controversial Interventions
- Session 4: Providing Care Part 2
 - Guest Speaker on the Hope Module
- Session 6: Providing Care Part 3
 - Interpersonal Counseling with Guest Speaker
- Session 7: Providing Care Part 4
 - Problem Management Plus with Guest Speaker
- Session 8: Importance of Consultation- with Guest Speaker
- Session 9: Impact on Workers/First Responders Part 1
- Session 10: Impact on Workers/First Responders Part 2 with Guest Speaker

Future Directions

Expand curriculum to include skills-training and real-world disaster deployment/response opportunities.

References

- Flynn BW, Morganstein JC. *Curriculum Recommendations for Disaster Health Professionals: Disaster Behavioral Health*, Second Edition, 2020. https://www.usuhs.edu/sites/default/files/media/ncdmp/pdf/ncdmp_csts_revised.pdf
- Shultz JM. Perspectives on disaster public health and disaster behavioral health integration. *Disaster Health*. 2014; 2(2):69-74.