

## **Psychophysiological and Psychosocial Indicators of the Efficacy of a Stress Management Program for Health Professionals**

### **Results:**

This project aims at investigating the efficacy of a multimodal stress management program for health professionals using both psychophysiological and psychosocial indicators. The data collection has three phases. In Phase 1, a General stress diagnosis was offered to the entire staff of a central hospital (n=705). Using the GHQ-12, a higher prevalence of stress was found in the health professionals than in other comparable international studies.

In Phase 2, subjects with high levels of stress were given the opportunity to participate in an in depth stress diagnosis consisting of psychosocial, clinical and psycho-physiological measures. Results show that Social support, coping style and intensity of job demands are related to many self-reported stress responses such as Denial, Pressure, Anxiety, Depression, Guilt, Anger and Loss of Control. In Phase 3, a Stress Management Intervention was given to half of the subjects and the other half to a control group (wait list). The Experimental group had a 8-session group intervention with Evaluation times for E and C groups at Pre-test, Post-test, and at a 2 month follow up. Due to a difficulty in maintaining the subjects throughout the project, the third phase had a small sample size, and, although tentative, the data points to the effectiveness of the intervention in terms of diminishing physiological stress reactivity, negative emotional responses to stress and in increasing social support, a crucial stress coping mechanism. These changes seem to be maintained over the 2-month follow-up.

The products of this project are the development of a rigorous stress protocol, as well as a detailed stress management program manual.

### **Published Works:**

McIntyre, S. E., McIntyre, T. M. & Silverio, J. (2000). *Work stress and job satisfaction in Portuguese health professionals*. In Cox, T, Dewe, P., Nielson, K., & Cox, R. (Eds.) European Academy of Occupational Health Psychology Conference Proceedings Series: Occupational Health Psychology: Europe 2000. Nottingham: I-WHO Publications. ISSN: 1472-0200

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McIntyre, T. M., McIntyre, S. E, Araújo-Soares, V., Figueiredo, M., Johnston, D., & Faria, F. (2003). *Programa de gestão de stress para profissionais de saúde* (Stress management program for health professionals). Braga: Universidade do Minho.

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