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“LIVING A HEALTHY LIFE”

**AN EVALUATION OF
A SELF-MANAGEMENT FOR CHRONIC
CONDITIONS COURSE
ARTHRITIS NEW ZEALAND**

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Abstract

Chronic disease management is a major challenge for health care systems in the developed world. Self-management has the ability to help improve health status, health behaviours and reduce health care utilisation for people with chronic disease. In this exploratory before-after cohort study, questionnaires were distributed to people with chronic disease attending a self-management course offered by Arthritis New Zealand. Ninety-four people at baseline, and at six months, 67 people, completed eight health status, four health behaviour, one self-efficacy, and six health care utilisation measures. The 67 participants at six months also completed seven course evaluation measures in addition to course delivery, social support, course barrier and course attendance measures. The relationship at onset between self-efficacy and health status was analysed using a stepwise regression. Self-efficacy, which accounted for 27% of variance, was significantly related to health distress and to the energy levels of participants. To determine the relationship between self-efficacy and self-management behaviours at baseline, standard multiple regressions were run. Self-efficacy was unrelated to the self-management behaviours of the participants at the course onset. To analyse the mediation effect of self-efficacy on health status a stepwise regression was run, while holding self-efficacy constant. Self-efficacy at six months explained 42% of the variance in baseline self-efficacy, after controlling for baseline self-efficacy in the second model, self-efficacy at six months was significantly related to perceived illness intrusiveness and accounted for an additional 58% of the variance. Two hierarchical stepwise-regressions assessed the mediation effect of self-efficacy on self-management behaviours. Self-efficacy at six months accounted for no additional variance in the participants' self-management skills. Paired t-tests and Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed ranks measured changes in health status, self-efficacy, health behaviours and health care utilisation. No significant improvements occurred in health status. Significant improvements occurred in four health outcomes. Independent t-tests and the Mann-Whitney tests identified significant differences between gender, age and location with health status, health behaviour and health care utilisation outcomes at baseline and at six months. The process evaluation of the course showed general satisfaction. Explanations for the results are offered, limitations of the study are highlighted, and suggestions for future chronic disease self-management research are proposed.

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List of Figures

Figure 1:	<i>Chronic Care Model (Manukau)</i>	12
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List of Tables

Table 1.1:	Course Overview	31
Table 1.2:	Session Overview	32
Table 2.1:	Demographic Characteristics	43
Table 2.2:	Top Seven Chronic Conditions	43
Table 3.1:	Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficients	58
Table 3.2:	Self-efficacy at Baseline Regressed onto Health Status and Health Behaviour Variables at Baseline	60
Table 3.3:	Self-efficacy at Six Months Regressed onto Health Status and Health Behaviour Variables at Six Months	62
Table 3.4:	Comparisons of Means, <i>SD</i> , and Alpha Coefficients of Health Status, Self-Efficacy, and Self-Management Behaviours	63

Table of Contents

Abstract		ii
Acknowledgements		iii
List of Figures		iv
List of Tables		v
Chapter 1	Introduction	1
1.1	Chronic Disease	1
1.2	The Impact of Chronic Disease on Individuals	2
1.3	Causes of Chronic Disease	4
1.4	The Burden of Chronic Disease	5
1.5	Chronic Disease Management	7
1.6	Health Promotion	17
1.7	Self-Management	18
1.8	Computer-Based Self-Management Education	23
1.9	Telephone Interviewing	23
1.10	The <i>LHL</i> Course Structure	27
1.11	Theoretical Framework	33
1.12	Research Questions	39
Chapter 2	Method	40
2.1	Research Design	40
2.2	Participants	41
2.3	Procedures	44
2.4	Outcome Measures	44
Chapter 3	Results	53
3.1	Data Screening	53
3.2	Data Analyses	53
3.3	Descriptive Data Analyses	54
3.4	Inferential Data Analyses	56

Chapter 4	Discussion	70
4.1	Overview	70
4.2	Limitations of this Study	83
4.3	Future Research.....	88
Chapter 5	Conclusion	90
References	92
Appendix A	Advertising Leaflets	104
Appendix B	Location of Participants	105
Appendix C	Questionnaire (Baseline)	106
Appendix D	Questionnaire (Six Months)	107
Appendix E	Human Ethics Approval	108
Appendix F	Information Sheet (Baseline)	109
Appendix G	Information Sheet (Six Months)	110
Appendix H	Independent t-tests	111
Appendix I	International Studies	112