

Introduction

Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) can improve the mental health of health care workers (HCW).^{1,2} How will the inclusion of oncology patients (OP) in MBSR classes for HCW affect the mental health of HCW?

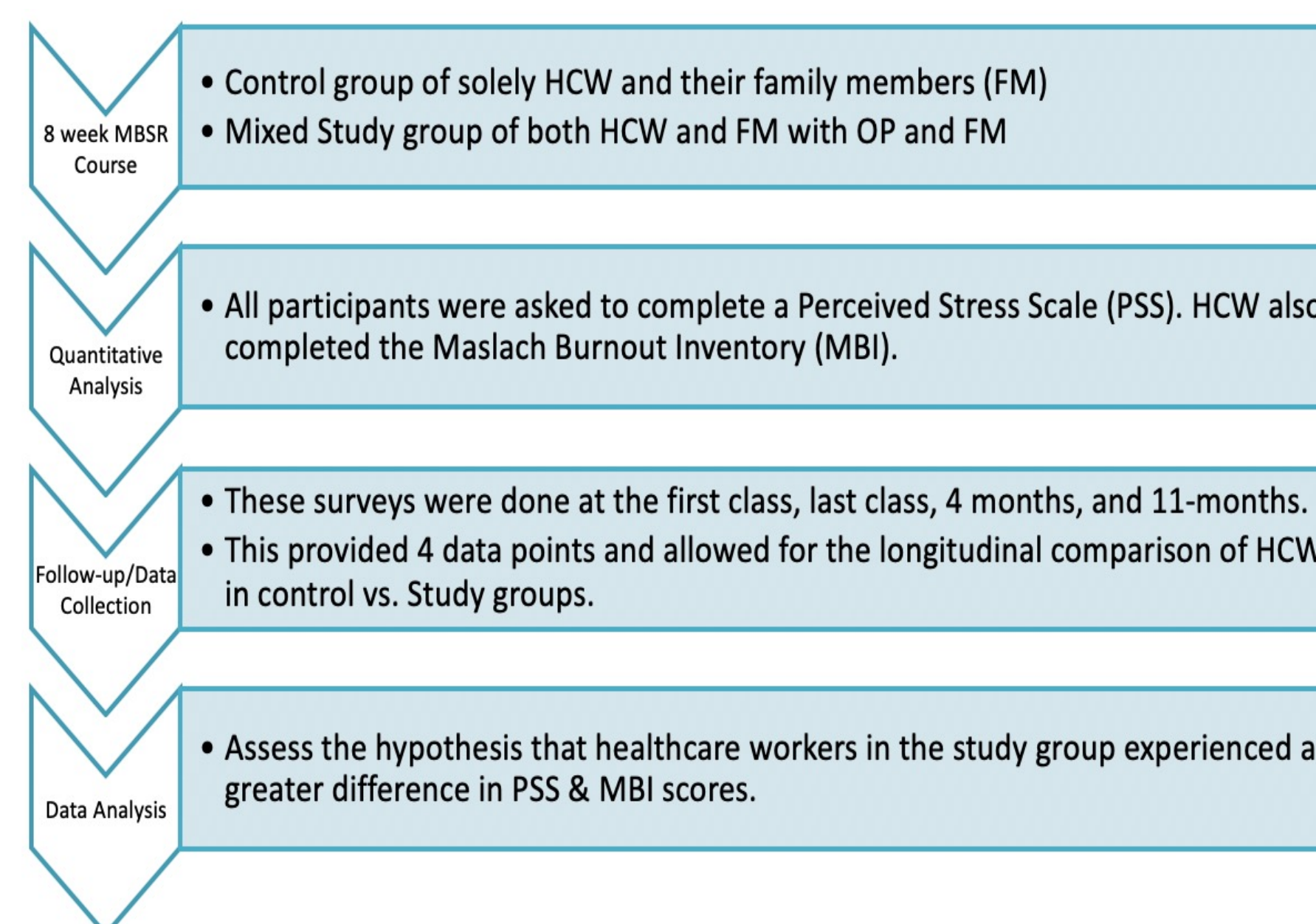
Aims and Objectives

This novel project aims to provide evidence that a mixed MBSR course of OP and HCW can significantly decrease HCW burnout.

Methods

The standard MBSR curriculum teaches meditation, yoga and stress management in 28 contact hours over eight weeks. Methods are displayed in figure 1 flowchart. 18 HCW and two of their family members (FM) were randomized to a study group which also included 27 OP and three of their FM. 19 HCW and two of their FM were randomized to control population. Study and control populations attended simultaneous MBSR courses taught by certified MBSR teachers. HCW completed pre, post, 4 month and 11-month f/u Perceived Stress Scales (PSS) and Maslach Burnout Inventories (MBI).

Figure 1:

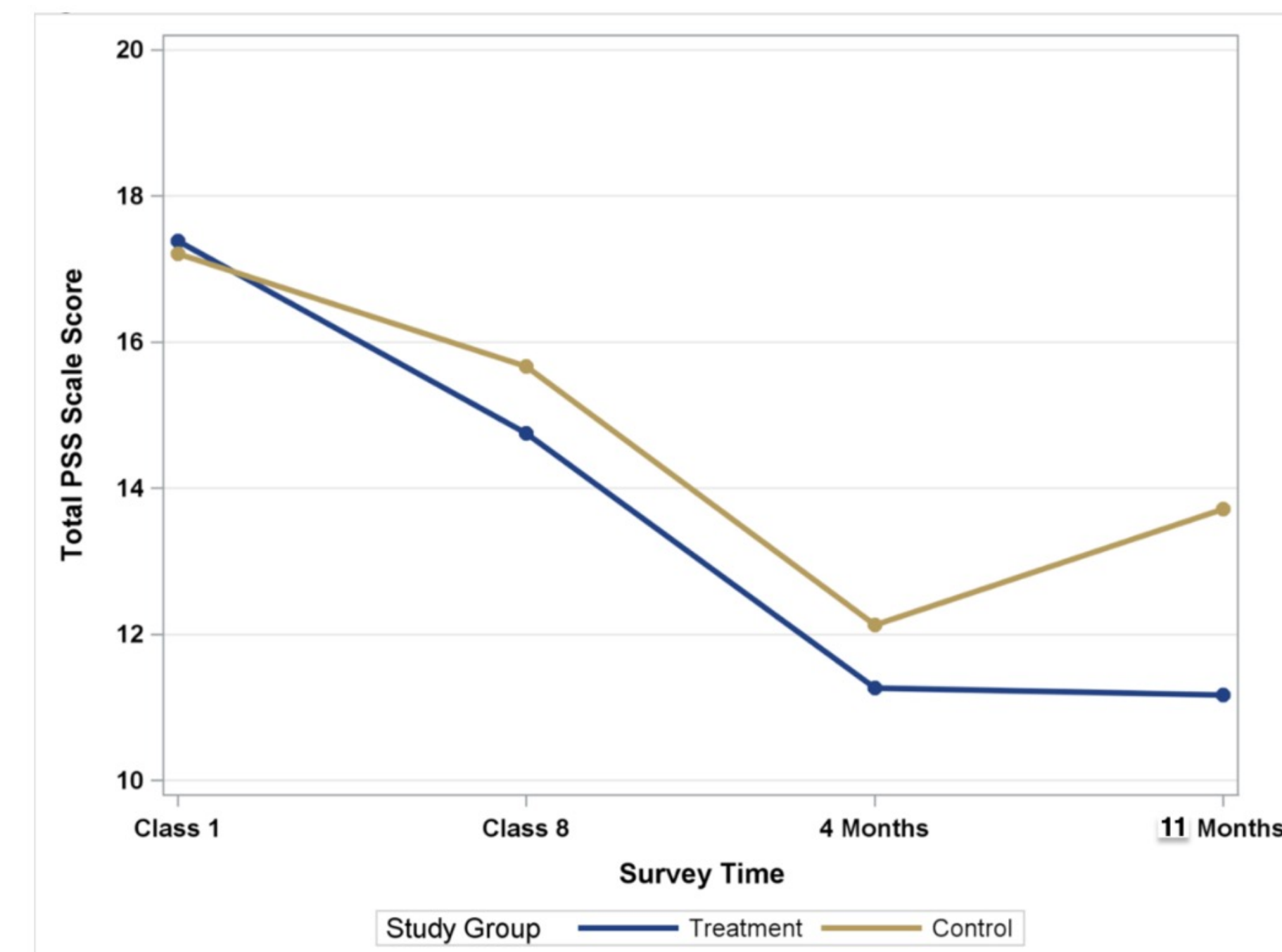


Results

Average class attendance was 89.9%. Total PSS Scale Scores in the Treatment group significantly decreased between Class 1 and Month 11 ($P = 0.0017$), but did not significantly decrease in the Control group during this time frame ($P = 0.1671$). This is seen in Figure 2.

The total MBI and its subscales portrayed no statistically significant differences between class 1 and month 11. The control group scores on one of 22 MBI questions "I don't really care what happens to some patients" showed a significant increase while scores in the treatment group score did not ($P = 0.0106$).

Figure 2:



Conclusions

This research provides evidence that the integration of OP with HCW provides sustainable improvements in measures of HCW mental health and burnout while the HCW-only class participants did not experience these benefits.

References

1. Kabat-Zinn J. Some reflections on the origins of MBSR, skillful means, and the trouble with maps. *Contemp Buddhism*. 2011;12(1):281-306. doi:10.1080/14639947.2011.564844
2. Kenne Sarenmalm E, Mårtensson LB, Andersson BA, Karlsson P, Bergh I. Mindfulness and its efficacy for psychological and biological responses in women with breast cancer. *Cancer Med*. 2017;6(5):1108-1122. doi:10.1002/cam4.1052

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