

Effectiveness of Brief simplified intervention delivered by telephone in reducing harmful alcohol use: A randomized controlled trial

Abstract

Background: Although nurses are in a privileged position to assess and intervene with people whose alcohol consumption is harmful, this profession is still an underexplored resource about Brief Intervention, both in person and remotely. The aim of this study is to assess the effectiveness of a Brief simplified Intervention delivered by telephone in a Primary Health Care facilities.

Methods: A randomized two-armed study was performed in São Paulo Brazil with a 14 primary care units (clusters) located in the eastern, south and part of the city . The sample was stratified, with a single block in each stratum. A statistician, who was not involved in recruitment, undertook the cluster, stratified randomization of clinics blind to their identities, with 14 units randomized to each group, 7 from each stratum. Mean outcomes were measured using dichotomous items about alcohol use. To assess the pattern of alcohol use, participants answered the Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test – Concise (AUDIT-C). Follow-up evaluations were performed at 90 (T1), 180 (T2) and 360 (T3) days in both the experimental and control groups

Results: A total of 4597 participants were screened; of these 3060 were excluded for not meeting the inclusion criteria. Of the 706 potential eligible, another 504 were excluded, resulting in a sample of 202 participants who were randomized into two groups. Into an experimental

group there were 77 participants, thus 64 completed the intervention. Into a control group 125 participants were allocated, thus, 2 participants did not receive the intervention and 80 finalized the study. In the Mixed Model analysis, there was a significant result on the main effect of time, it suggests that there was a change in the AUDIT-C variable across different time points between both groups ($P < 0.001$). The intervention group's AUDIT-C score decreased by 2.21 points, and the control group's decreased by 3.80 points from T0 to T1.