

Abstract

Healthcare can be a demanding field, and working on a rehabilitation unit can be both physically and emotionally challenging. Self-care practices are important and clinical staff must be educated on the resources available in order to reduce perceived levels of stress in the workplace. This research is based on the theoretical framework of Jean Watson who focuses on the necessity of healing potential for both – “the one who is caring and the one who is cared for because only by caring for ourselves, will we be able to care for others” (Wagner, Watson & Cara, 2020).

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of a stretching program as compared to a guided meditation intervention on reducing perceived levels of stress in the workplace.

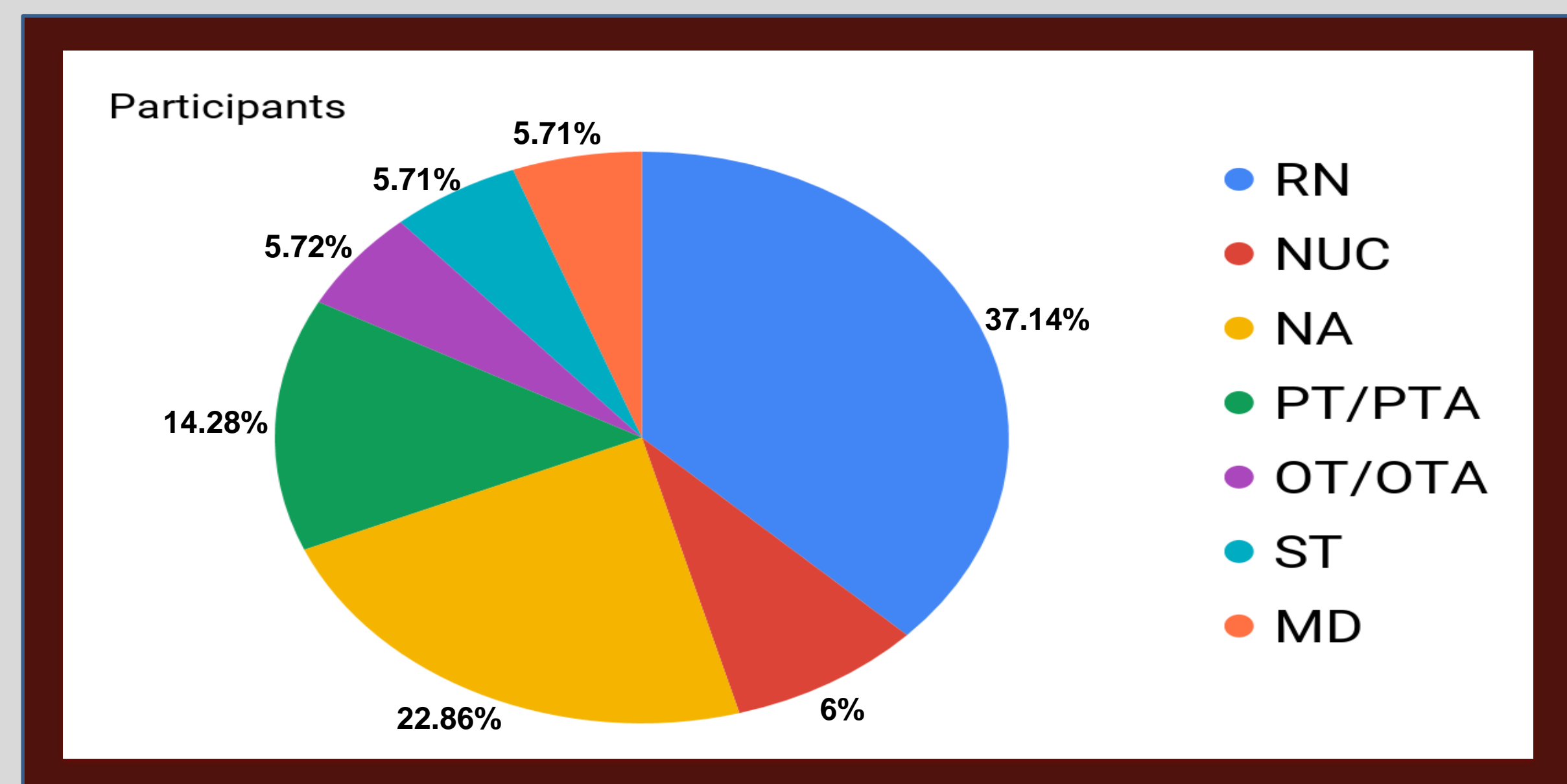
Design: A mixed-method interventional study utilizing convenience sampling.

Methods: Participants were divided into two interventional groups: stretching and guided meditation. The stretching group (n = 16) were educated on 10 stretching exercises targeting a variety of muscles and the meditation group (n = 22) were given options on an IPAD for practicing timed guided meditation.

Projected Results: Decrease levels of stress, rejuvenate positive energy, increase morale, positive work environment and increased patient satisfaction.

Methodology

Study Population: Interdisciplinary clinical staff comprising of Physical Therapists (PT), Physical Therapy Assistants (PTA), Registered Nurses (RN), Nursing Assistants (NA), Nursing Unit Clerks (NUC), Occupational Therapists (OT), Occupational Therapy Assistants (OTA), Speech Therapists (ST) and a Medical Doctor (MD) who consented voluntarily to participate were recruited using convenience sampling.

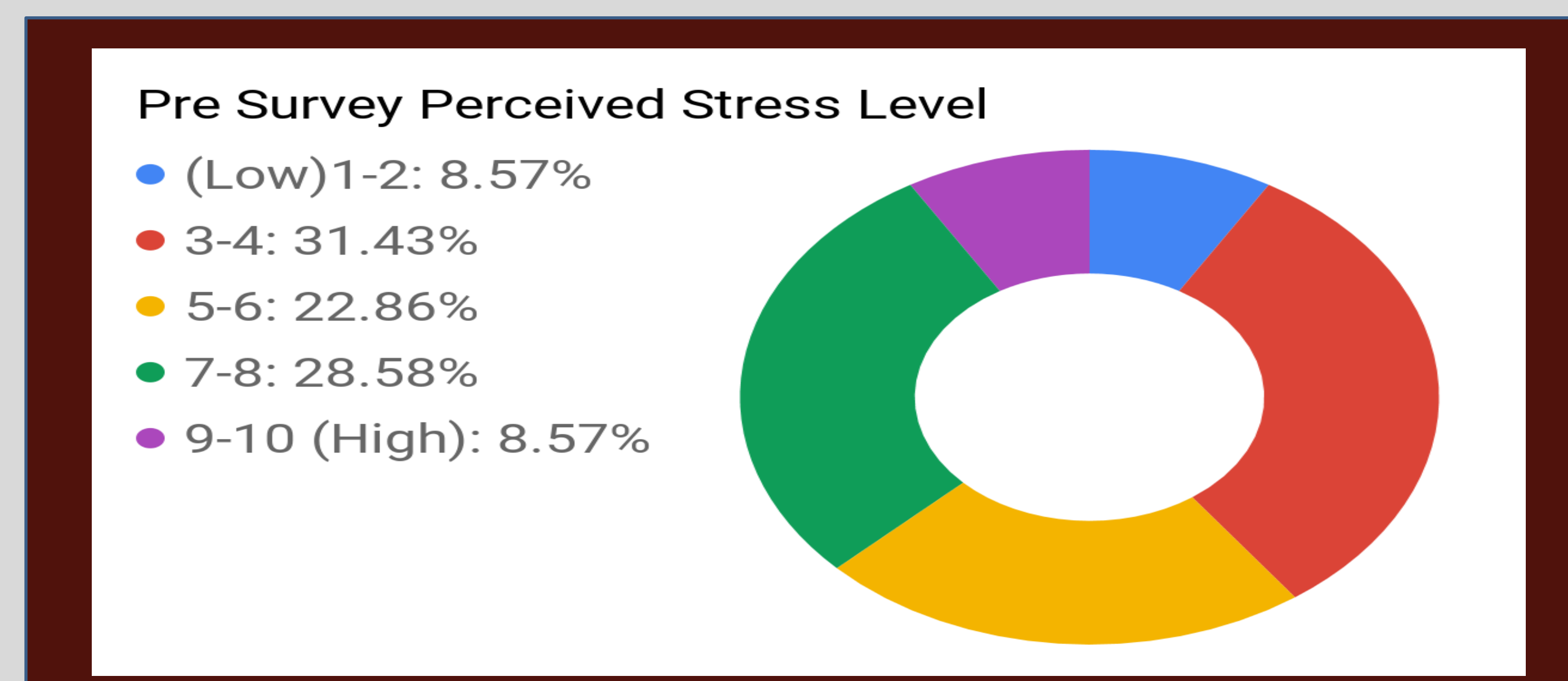


A total of 40 participants (N = 40) consented to take part in the study. Of this, 2 were lost to attrition. Participants were provided a 12 question pre-survey questionnaire to determine their perceived level of stress score. Each group selected 2 days of the week while scheduled to work to implement their selected intervention. Participants logged their pre and post intervention data into individually provided calendar charts over a 12 week period from June – August 2020. Following the 12 weeks of intervention implementation, participants will be asked to complete a post-survey questionnaire to compare responses.

Inclusion Criteria: Permanent Interdisciplinary Clinical Staff of the 4 East Rehabilitation Unit. Completion of The Association of Rehabilitation Nurses (ARN) Meditation module “Meditation Matters: Why Nurses and their Rehab Patients Should Start Meditating Now”.

Plan of Analysis

Mindfulness-based programs have shown to reduce stress, burnout, and improve overall job satisfaction and enhance compassion (van der Reit et al., 2018; Mahon et al., 2017). The outcome will be measured in perceived level of stress via pre-post intervention data comparison. Data will be analyzed using independent *t*-test and by generating a *p* value to view the significance of the results.

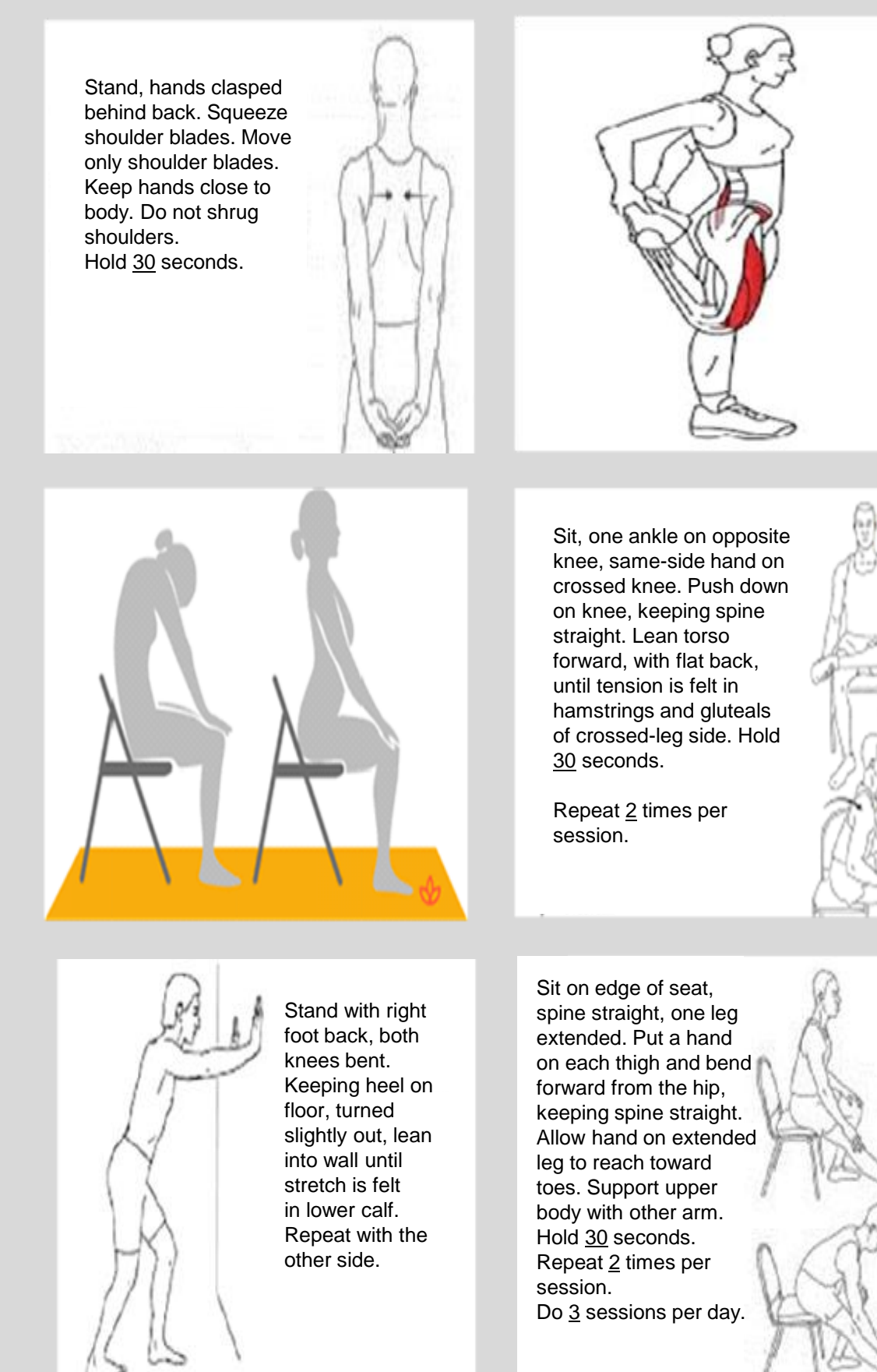


After completion of the research project, plans are to incorporate continued stress reduction interventions for both mind and body for all clinical staff. Ultimately, caregivers can promote patient self-care as a result of their education in effective self-care practices.

Interventions

Stretching: 10 different stretching exercises focusing on different muscle groups.

Meditation: Pre-recorded guided meditation via approved applications on Ipad and/or, pre-recorded guided meditation recoded by unit neuropsychologist.

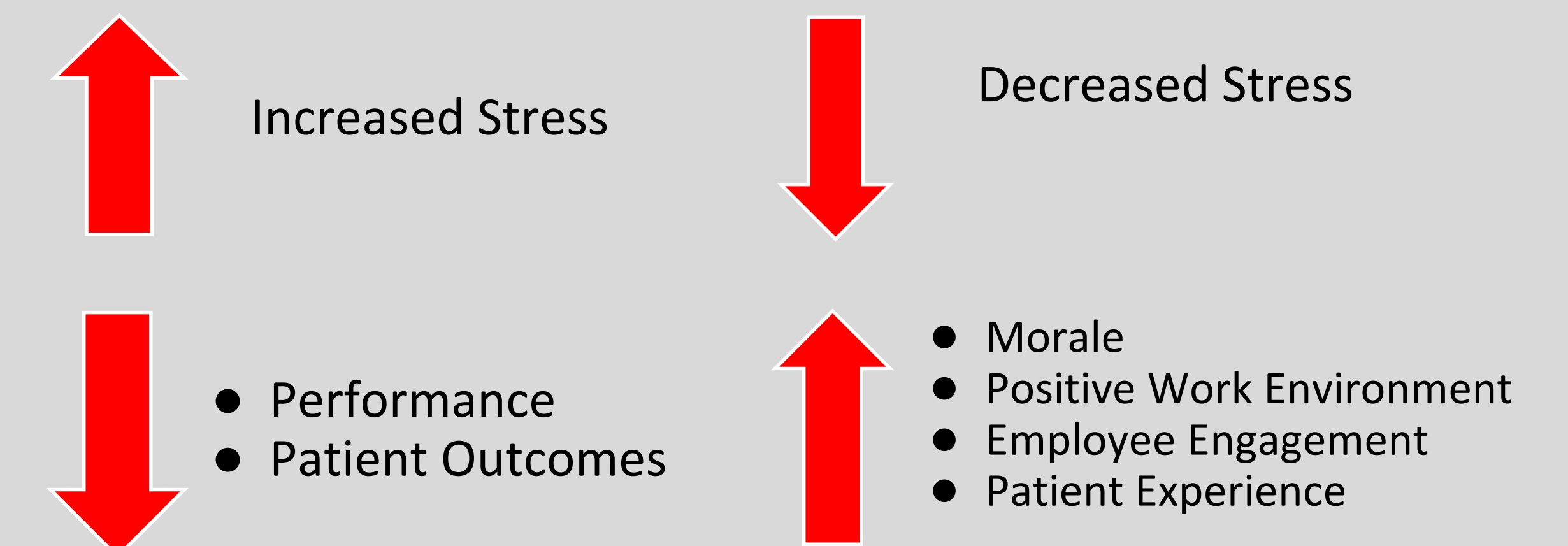


Preliminary and Projected Results

The study is expected to benefit the staff by decreasing levels of stress, rejuvenating positive energy and in turn increase morale in the workplace. As Watson points out, only by caring for ourselves, will we be able to care for others. Mindfulness-based programs have shown to reduce stress, burnout, and improve overall job satisfaction and enhance compassion (van der Reit et al., 2018; Mahon et al., 2017).

Meditation Group- The value of *t* is -6.827937. The value of *p* is < .00001. The result is significant at *p* < .05.

Stretching Group- The value of *t* is -3.595789. The value of *p* is < .00326. The result is significant at *p* < .05.



Next Steps

Clinical staff face immense amounts of stress and require effective coping skills to manage. This research is currently ongoing and is based on the theoretical framework of Jean Watson. Her theory focuses on the necessity of the healing potential for both- the one who is caring and the one who is cared for (Watson et al., 2020). Looking at both stretching and meditation data on hand thus far, it is interpreted that both interventions provide a reduction in perceived stress amongst staff. While more data needs to be obtained, preliminary data shows a positive effect.

References

Cezar de Costa, M. V., de Silva Filho, J. N., & Gurgel, J. L. (2019). Stretching exercises in perception of stress in nursing professionals: Randomized clinical trial. *Brazilian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 27(2), 357–366. doi: 10.4322/2526-8910.ctoAO1696

Deible, S., Fioravanti, M., Tarantino, B., & Cohen, S. (2015). Implementation of an integrative coping and resiliency program for nurses. *Global Advances in Health and Medicine*, 4(1), 28–33. doi: 10.7453/gahmj.2014.057

Mahon, M. A., Mee, L., Brett, D., & Dowling, M. (2017). Nurses' perceived stress and compassion following a mindfulness meditation and self-compassion training. *Journal of Research in Nursing*, 22(8), 572–583. doi: 10.1177/1744987117721596

Van der Reit, P., Levett-Jones, T., & Aquino-Russell, C. (2018). The effectiveness of mindfulness meditation for nurses and nursing students: An integrated literature review. *Nurse Education Today*, 65, 201–211. doi: 10.1016/j.nedt.2018.03.018

Wagner, A. L., Watson, J., & Cara, C. (2020). Core Concepts of Jean Watson's Theory of Human Caring/Unitary Caring Science. Retrieved April 17, 2020, from <https://www.watsoncaringscience.org>