



# CBT Skills Groups Initiative

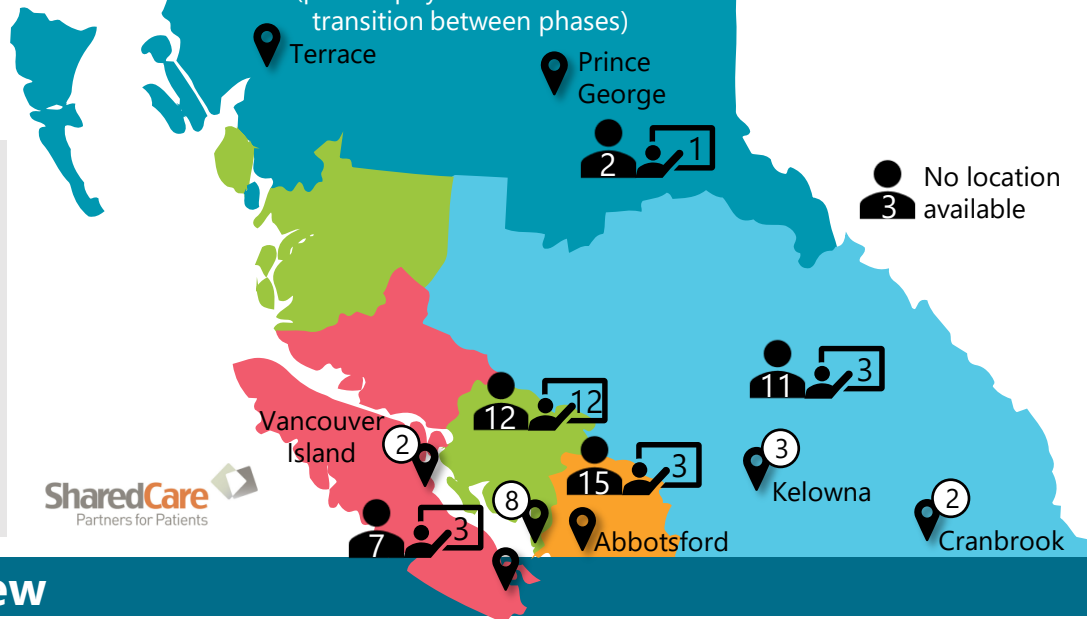
This summary presents evaluation findings<sup>1</sup> from April to June 2023 of the CBT Skills Groups Spread Initiative, which offers CBT Skills training to physicians and patients.

## Physician Overview

72

physicians participated in Phase 1-4 training this quarter; 50 in Phase 1, 5 in Phase 2, 2 in Phase 3 and 15 in Phase 4. (plus 17 physicians who are in transition between phases)

 **4 trainees** (all family physicians) have now successfully completed their training and have become **Certified Facilitators**



**Legend:**

-  Number of **Phase 1 trainees** by Health Authority
-  Number of **Phase 2-4 trainees** by Health Authority
-  Number of DoFPs
-  A Division of Family Practice (DoFP)



## Patient overview



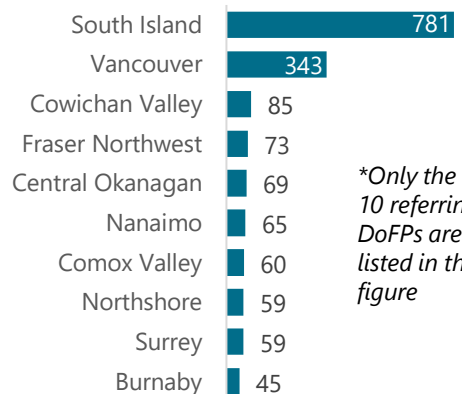
301

Patients participated in CBT Skills Foundations Groups this quarter, **primarily from the following DoFPs:** South Island (n=118), Vancouver (n=56), Fraser Northwest (n=12), and Nanaimo (n=12)

2048

Patients were referred this quarter by **865** providers. On average, providers referred 2 patients each.

The **highest number of referrals** were made by the following **Divisions of Family Practice (DoFP)\*:**



*\*Only the top 10 referring DoFPs are listed in this figure*

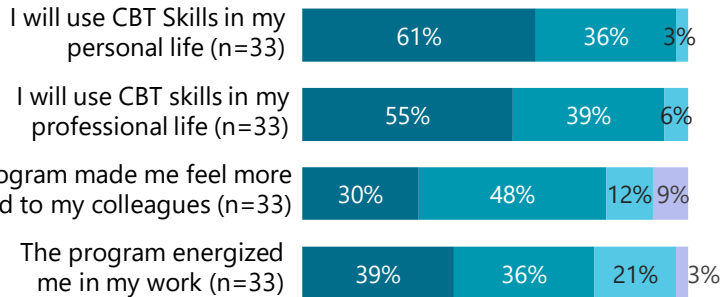
<sup>1</sup> Findings are based on administrative data of physicians / patients participating during the quarter, physician evaluations surveys and patient evaluation surveys. Survey responses will not match administrative data; surveys are voluntary and open ongoing therefore may include responses from physicians / patients from other quarters.

# Impacts on Phase 1/Physician Wellness Participants

## Learning and applying CBT Skills

Based on survey responses of Phase 1 / Physician Wellness participants this quarter (33 of 50; 66% response rate), **over 90% agreed they will use CBT skills in their personal and professional lives.**

■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree



## Satisfaction with the program

Based on survey responses of Phase 1 / Physician Wellness participants this quarter (n=33), **over 90% agreed they would recommend the program to others and it was a valuable use of their time.**

**94%** of physician wellness participants (31 of 33) would **recommend the program to colleagues**

**91%** of physician wellness participants (30 of 33) would **recommend the program to patients**

**94%** of physician wellness participants (31 of 33) **agreed the program was a valuable use of their time**

## Interest in becoming a CBT Skills Group Facilitator

Based on survey responses of Phase 1 / Physician Wellness participants, **19 physicians** (58%; 19 of 33) **would like to be trained to become a CBT Skills Group facilitator.**

Of these 19 physicians...

**32% (6 of 19)**  
**WERE ALREADY**  
interested when they started training

**68% (13 of 19)**  
**BECAME**  
interested by the end of the training

## Professional Fulfillment & Burnout

Physicians are requested, at the start and end of their training, to complete a survey which employs the **Stanford Professional Fulfillment Index<sup>2</sup>** to investigate the **wider impacts of the training.** Findings from these surveys will be analyzed annually, once a sufficient sample size is available.

The following feedback was received from physician wellness participants this quarter:

**"Cannot say enough good things about this course. It was all effective.** Really appreciate emphasizing the basics and building upon that e.g. pausing / stopping / mindfulness."

– Physician wellness participant

**"I found it extremely valuable to be able to vocalize and share my own observations from completing these [home practice exercises], but also to be able to hear about the experiences of the others in the class as it made me think about my own challenges from a different perspective."**

– Physician wellness participant

<sup>2</sup> The **Stanford Professional Fulfillment Index (PFI)** is a 16-item instrument that covers burnout (work exhaustion and interpersonal disengagement) and professional fulfillment. Response options are on a five-point Likert scale. Scale scores are calculated by averaging the item scores of all the items within the corresponding scale. Scale scores can then be multiplied by 25 to create a scale range from 0 to 100. Higher score on the professional fulfillment scale is more favourable. In contrast, higher scores on the work exhaustion or interpersonal disengagement scales are less favourable.

# Physician Wellness Focus Group Feedback

Focus groups with physician wellness participants (n=5) were conducted in February and March 2023 to better understand their experience and suggestions for the future. Some of the early learnings are detailed in the sections below.

## What's working well

- Participating in a group with other physicians (e.g., felt comfortable, shared common interests)
- Having access to resources / materials (e.g., workbook, additional resources shared)
- Having a facilitator who is knowledgeable, experienced, compassionate
- Virtual format was accessible, allowed for flexibility
- Length of sessions / course
- Opportunity for interaction and physical movement throughout the sessions (e.g., grounding exercises, warm up)

**"Having something in common in the group is probably really valuable and helpful for people to start sharing."**

*-Physician Wellness focus group participant*

**"I printed one page from each chapter that I reference. I also read one of the books that was recommended. I think from all the reading I put in outside of the course, I got quite a bit out of it."**

*- Physician Wellness focus group participant*

## Impacts



Feeling less alone



Better understanding of CBT knowledge / skills



Better able to manage work stressors



Increased knowledge of new techniques / information to support oneself

## Suggestions

- Offer additional course topics for physicians (e.g., how physicians can apply CBT skills in their work / support patients with chronic pain or fatigue)
- Increase promotion of Physician Wellness training
- Offer follow up / check-in sessions with Physician Wellness participants 3- or 6-months post-program
- Offer Physician Wellness groups to providers on a routine basis (e.g., refresher modules)

**"I haven't seen any more emails come out about [the CBT Skills Groups] since the [initial] emails came out. If it was something that was offered regularly, I would spread the message at work that I would recommend the course."**

*-Physician Wellness focus group participant*

## Professional Fulfillment & Burnout

The following feedback was received from focus group participants this quarter:

**"Before I took the course, I was sometimes having thoughts like 'I don't know how long I can do this job'. Now, encountering situations at work that are stressful for me, I have some papers from the course that I'll reference and commit to using the tools. I'm feeling more now that I can see myself having a decades long career at my current job."**

*- Physician Wellness focus group participant*



**"If you're not talking about [challenges and stressors] at work, you don't realize everybody else is actually thinking and feeling the same way. Even just getting together in a small group on Zoom, a lot of the same themes start coming out. It's helpful to know you have that shared human experience."**

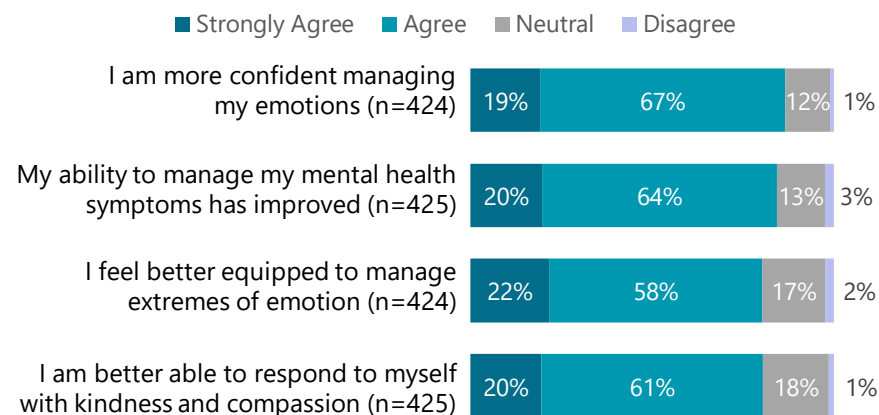
*- Physician Wellness focus group participant*



# Impacts on Participating Patients

## Learning and applying CBT Skills

Based on survey responses of patients who participated in a group this quarter, over **80% agreed that as a result of the group they are more confident managing their emotions.**



**"I am so grateful to learn and relearn some of the basic CBT tools. It has helped me slow down in my reactions and to be more observant and aware of my thoughts and reactions."**  
– Patient participant

## Depression and anxiety severity

Patients are requested, at the start and end of their group, to complete a survey which employs the **Patient Health Questionnaire 8<sup>3</sup> (PHQ-8)** and the **Generalized Anxiety Disorder 7<sup>4</sup> (GAD-7)** to investigate **impacts of CBT Skills on depression and anxiety, respectively.** *There was an insufficient number of completed PHQ-8 and GAD-7 scores available for analysis at the time of preparing this summary.*

The following feedback was received from patient participants this quarter:

**"My two huge take aways were that thoughts are not necessarily true and that the brain can be retrained with constant practice, knowing these things is EMPOWERING."**

– Patient participant

## Satisfaction with CBT Skills groups

Based on survey responses of patients who participated in a group this quarter, **95% agreed they felt safe in the group and would recommend it to friends and family.**

95%

of patients (412 of 435\*) **agreed or strongly agreed they felt safe in the group. This level of agreement was similar across both white and racialized patients.** (\*of the other 5%, 4% were neutral, 0.5% disagreed and 0.7% strongly disagreed)

95%

of patients (409 of 434) **agreed, or strongly agreed, they would recommend this program to friends and family**

**"My experience of the CBT Skills workshop was not only satisfactory but much more than I expected. I feel very hopeful now."**  
– Patient participant

**"The group aspect was so helpful for addressing anxiety and depression. ... The group therapy makes mental illness feel less isolating. It was an immense relief to hear directly from so many different people about their struggles with the same things I struggle with. That helped a lot with developing self-compassion."**

– Patient participant

<sup>3</sup> The **PHQ-8** is an 8-item instrument for screening, diagnosing, monitoring and measuring the severity of depression. Responders are asked to rate the frequency of depression symptoms in the last 2 weeks on a Likert scale ranging from 0-3. Items are summed to provide a total score. In terms of the depression severity, a score of 1-9 is considered 'minimal', 10-14 mild, 15-19 Moderate, 20-24 Severe. Only patients with a score of 18 or less at time of referral are eligible to register for CBT Skills Groups.

<sup>4</sup> The **GAD-7** is a 7-item questionnaire for screening and severity measuring of generalized anxiety disorder (GAD). The GAD-7 score is calculated by assigning scores of 0, 1, 2, and 3, to the response categories of 'not at all', 'several days', 'more than half the days', and 'nearly every day', respectively, and adding together the scores for the seven questions. Scores of 5, 10, and 15 are taken as the cut-off points for mild, moderate and severe anxiety, respectively.