

The Development of a National Nutrition and Mental Health Research Agenda with Comparison of Priorities among Diverse Stakeholders

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For which topic were research priorities identified?

nutrition and mental health

In which location was the research priority setting conducted?

North America - Canada

Why was it conducted at all?

Nutrition interventions are integral in mental health promotion and mental illness prevention, treatment and rehabilitation. While there is a need to engage diverse stakeholders to define research priorities, currently no collaborative nutrition and mental health research agendas exist.

What was the objective?

to develop a national nutrition and mental health research agenda based on the engagement of diverse stakeholders and to assess research priorities by stakeholder groups

What was the outcome?

a ranking list of 9 research questions

How long did the research prioritization take?

No information provided.

Which methods were used to identify research priorities?

interview; survey; workshop

How were the priorities for research identified exactly?

Step 1: forming advisory group, scoping review of literature. Step 2: survey 1: participants were asked to specify among a list of mental health conditions the ones that should be prioritized for research, participants were asked to choose research priorities among a list of special populations, participants were asked to rate each question and asked to select the one research question they thought was the most important within each of the three categories, lastly all research questions from the three categories were presented and participants were asked to select the top three they believed would have the greatest impact on nutrition and mental health. Step 3: interviews with key informants: participants were asked to reflect on the priority research areas and rankings from the national online survey. Step 4: data processing: thematic analysis of interviews. Step 5: survey 2: with remaining key informants. Step 6: workshop: to formulate research agenda, integrating data from scoping review, online stakeholder survey and key informant consultations, potential research topics and questions were formulated and presented during workshop, work in small groups to establish a priority rating for each of the nutrition and mental health research questions, small group discussions, plenary discussions

Which stakeholders took part?

Researchers, academics, administrators, service providers, policymakers, practitioners, non-profit, industry and funding agency representatives, front-line workers, patients and those who provide care for them. Survey 1: 811 participants. Interviews: 9 participants. Survey 2: approx. 60 participants. Workshop: academic researchers, mental health, nutrition and community health-service providers, government, policy makers.

How were stakeholders recruited?

The project was a collaborative effort of the Canadian Mental Health Association (Ontario), Dietitians of Canada and the University of British Columbia. Representatives from each of these agencies and institutions as well as a hired project coordinator formed the core working group. The survey was nationally disseminated for six weeks to the extensive network generated by the advisory committee. Potential participants were made aware of the survey through direct email notifications and advertisements through relevant media channels (e.g. Twitter, LinkedIn, electronic newsletters). In addition, a snowball approach was used where survey participants were encouraged to actively engage other interested parties.

Were stakeholders actively involved or did they just participate?

Stakeholders were mere participants of the research prioritization process; they were not actively involved in the process.